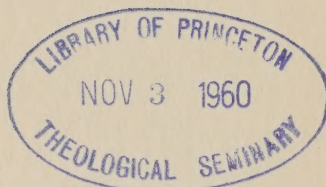




**CHURCH COOPERATION
IN THE UNITED STATES**

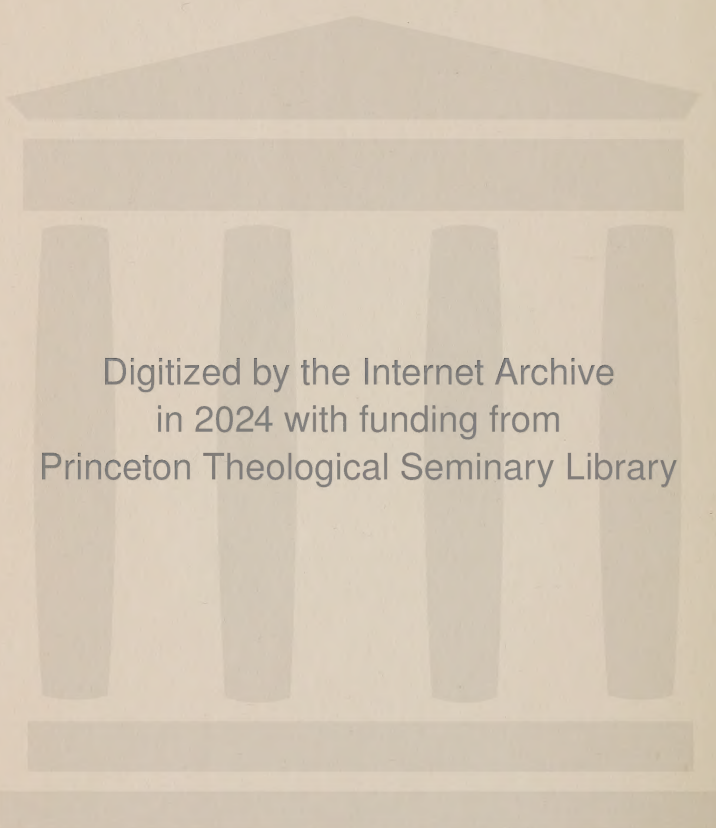


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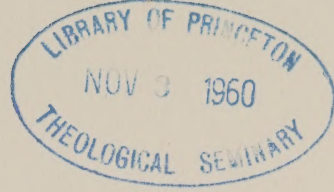
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Church cooperation in the
United States



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**CHURCH COOPERATION
IN THE UNITED STATES**



CHURCH COOPERATION IN THE UNITED STATES

The Nation-Wide Backgrounds and Ecumenical Significance
of
STATE AND LOCAL COUNCILS OF CHURCHES
in their
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

By
✓
ROSS W. SANDERSON

The Association of Council Secretaries
(Local, State, and National)

1960

CHURCH COOPERATION IN THE UNITED STATES

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by the

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FOREWORD

The conciliar movement has come of age—not just twenty-one years old, but a century of existence. In the last five years, a number of state and local councils of churches have observed their centennials. Thus, this cooperative work of the churches has become an accepted as well as a growing expression of the Church of Jesus Christ.

A fledgling organization usually isn't much concerned about the past. Its time and energy are taken up with the demands of the present and visions of the future. As it reaches maturity, though, increasingly it becomes conscious of its rootage.

The council of churches movement has now reached this stage, but very little has been written about it. Of all the areas of the work of the Church, this has been the least treated. Only in a few councils has a good job been done in collating and preserving historical records. Where it is happening it has taken some specific occasion, such as the celebration of a centennial, to cause a history to be written.

For fifteen years now the Association of Council Secretaries has been concerned about the publication of a history of state and local councils of churches. As the professional organization of all employed staff members of interdenominational organizations (city, county, state, national and international) cooperating with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, the A.C.S. three years ago took formal action to have a committee appointed with power to raise funds and publish a history.

The writing of a history isn't done by committee. In choosing an author, though, our group had a very happy opportunity. Ross W. Sanderson was the obvious choice. And he was available and willing. There are very few men now living who have had the breadth of experience in the conciliar movement as he. From 1920 to 1929 he served as Executive Secretary of the Wichita, Kansas, Council of Churches. For the next three years he was associated with H. Paul Douglass as Project Director of the Institute of Social and Religious Research. Then from 1932 to 1937 he served the Maryland-Delaware Council of Churches and Religious Education as Executive Secretary. From then to 1942 he occupied a similar position with the Buffalo Council of Churches. In the National Council of Churches he has served as interim

executive for United Church Canvass as well as in the Department of the Urban Church. From 1952 to 1954 he was a visiting professor at the Boston University School of Theology. He is the author of *Strategy of City Church Planning* and *The Church Serves the Changing City*. In addition, he has a long series of survey reports and other articles to his credit. Then, too, he has served his own denomination, the Congregational-Christian, in capacities as pastor and director of Field Research for its Board of Home Missions.

Another fortunate circumstance is that this book was ready for the annual conference of the Association of Council Secretaries at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, June 19-25, 1960. The theme of this meeting was: *The Conciliar Movement: An Appraisal in the Light of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow*. The book was a valuable resource.

If this book, *Church Cooperation in the United States*, aids churchmen not only to appreciate the vision and labor of our forerunners but also to equip them to serve the present day and hand on a goodly heritage to their successors, it will serve its purpose. It is our hope that this volume will be introductory only, and will be but the first of many to follow.

Hartford, Connecticut
May 3, 1960

The History Committee
Association of Council Secretaries
Harold B. Keir, Chairman

Presidents of A.C.S. during
the years of the Committee's
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PREFACE

Fifteen years ago I was bequeathed a large file of archives accumulated by Roy B. Guild and John Milton Moore over a period of three decades. Dr. Guild had long wished to write a history of the state and local council movement, with major emphasis on the personalities whom he had known. It seemed a happy and relatively easy task to take over where he had left off, filling in details of a story already outlined. The idea of such a narrative won general approval. The chief necessity seemed to be merely to find time to get at the job.

Meanwhile there were other things to do. The materials were however repeatedly examined and carefully arranged, geographically and chronologically; and the writing process was more carefully assessed. Finally, there came freedom to get seriously to work. Once at it, the task loomed larger and larger, as some of those best informed were sure it would. The assembled data, a mixture of the priceless and the inconsequential, needed supplementing at many points, especially for the intervening years; the movement had snowballed, and the size of the task had greatly increased. The primary problem now was not to find data, but to evaluate and compress; not to find something to say, but how to say it briefly enough to suit the initial market.

Obviously one could not write a detailed history of more than two score state councils, or nearly three hundred local councils with paid staff, or nearly seven hundred volunteer local councils, or more than two thousand councils of church women. Even selected case studies seemed to provide no adequate answer. What was really needed was a crew of historical workers, and at least a decade for their investigations and writing. But such dreams require money and time, neither of which was available in the necessary abundance. So we have done what we could, hoping that this little volume will serve as a sort of *historical primer* to open up a vast quest for more adequate documentation of state and local church cooperation.

He who reads may well ask, fairly enough, "Why is *this* omitted, and *that* neglected?" If this all-too-brief story of state and local beginnings and national backgrounds serves to stimulate the writing and publication of a whole series of historical monographs, already well begun, it will have served one of its most important purposes. If it informs those who bear the burden and heat of our day as to some of

the pioneering events of earlier years, it will have been well worth the long months that have gone into its making.

For the patient, loyal, and generous support of the Association of Council Secretaries, expressed through the work of its special committee, and for the helpful counsel of many a colleague, my most hearty thanks. Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, Prof. Robert T. Handy, and Prof. Winthrop S. Hudson, who read the entire first typescript, are particularly to be thanked for their constructive criticism and generous encouragement, as is Prof. Paul H. Vieth for his helpful comments on an early version of Chapter II.

Like Charles Clayton Morrison, I am "no longer a 'young man in a hurry,'"¹ but forty years of interdenominational experience, at the local, state, and national levels, do dig deep foundations for solid convictions. I too have "no illusion that Protestantism will become ecumenical overnight," but many of us are on our way toward ecumenicity. If we are not to share in the satisfactions accompanying arrival, we can at least, with Robert Louis Stevenson, "travel hopefully."

If the church historian of a century from now can read the history of church cooperation in America a little better, because this volume has put one foot in the door that leads to the conditioning past, we shall be grateful.

January 14, 1960

ROSS W. SANDERSON

SOME INTERDENOMINATION ABBREVIATIONS

The complexity of the church cooperation task has deposited the following, along with many other "alphabetical" agencies:

ACS	Association of Council Secretaries (1940-)
AES	Association of Executive Secretaries (1915-1940)
BFA	Board of Field Administration (ICRE)
CDFA	Central Department of Field Administration (NCC, 1950-1954)
CWHM	Council of Women for Home Missions (1908-1940)
DCE	Division of Christian Education (NCC)
DCLW	Division of Christian Life and Work (NCC)
DFM	Division of Foreign Missions (NCC)
DHM	Division of Home Missions (NCC)
DUC	Department of the Urban Church (DHM, NCC)
DUCW	Department of United Church Women (NCC)
ECOA	Employed Council Officers' Association (1934-1940)
EFSC	Education Field Services Committee (DCE, NCC)
EOA	Employed Officers' Association (ISSA)
FC	Federal Council of the Churches of Christ (1908-1950)
FCB	Federal Council <i>Bulletin</i>
FMC	Foreign Missions Conference of North America (1911-1950)
FCFD	FC Field Department (there were various predecessor commissions and committees)
GCPFO	General Committee on Program and Field Operations (NCC)
HMC	Home Missions Council (1908-1940) Home Missions Council of North America (1940-1950)
ICFC	Inter-Council Field Committee (1934-1939)
ICFD	Inter-Council Field Department (1939-1950)
ICRE	International Council of Religious Education (1922-1950)
IJRE	<i>International Journal of Religious Education</i> (1924-)
ISSA	International Sunday School Association
NCC	National Council of Churches
NCFCW	National Council of Federated Church Women
NCCW	National Council of Church Women
OCC	Office for Councils of Churches (NCC, 1954-)
UCM	United Church Men
UCW	United Church Women

The American Scene

Ecumenical Opportunity

Cooperative churchmanship as we now know it did not begin until the present century was well under way. The characteristic pattern of our nineteenth century religious cooperation tended to be undenominational and unofficial. At the outset America did not face, as it now does, "the ecumenical necessity."¹ The very word "ecumenical" is a twentieth-century addition to our church vocabulary. Rather, we were gradually confronted with an ecumenical opportunity.

The historic phrase "*cuius regio, eius religio*" reflects a characteristic aspect of the life of many European nations. While the prince might choose his religion, his subjects were expected to submit to that choice, unless they preferred to emigrate. The multiple origin of the American people automatically produced a novel amount of *religious heterogeneity*, which the American scene proceeded to accentuate. As the residual legatee of Europe's demographic diversity, and of its language and nationality differences, America inevitably experienced unprecedented religious diversification. Wide differences of polity and doctrine were reflected in different types of Protestant life in the several colonies, but this phase of sectionalism was later sharply modified.

The rapidly moving frontier compounded this original diversity. "The early years of the nineteenth century (saw) the beginnings of an astonishing growth of the denominations that are now numerically the largest in the country."² By 1808 Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians had all begun work as far west as Indiana.³ While the home mission journals "of the early nineteenth century called continually for greater consolidation of effort,"⁴ the period from the Revolution to the Civil War was one of ecclesiastical division, in which "churches became competitive with one another and broke the ties which bound them to the community." This competition continued for decades, later to be softened somewhat by the beginnings of "comity," but remains a fact still to be reckoned with in church extension, especially in the areas most rewarding institutionally. Individually influential neighborhood churches often "made no united impact upon the new communities." "The competitive churching of the West . . . eventually placed several ministers in communities that could hardly support one . . . Ultimately

many communities had too many churches for too few people. . . . Underchurching often resulted in a no less pagan community than overchurching with its attendant evils of discouragement, over-emphasis upon maintaining building and leadership, and the inevitable struggles for membership. . . . The minister, once an important figure in community life, lost this leadership because he did not belong to the whole community.”⁵

According to H. Paul Douglass, as the frontier moved westward our “nation created a new religious type the essential mark of which was sectarianism.” In his judgment, “The occasion of the multiplying sects was obviously the extreme individualism of the frontier and the unlimited opportunity it afforded for persons under emotional strain to follow their religious hunches. . . . Sociologically speaking, however, the cause of the multiplying of sects was primarily the fact that social changes were taking place at unequal rates.”⁶

Nevertheless, it has been urged, “the neighborliness of the frontier softened the asperity of conflicting theologies, and the practical nature of life on the frontier caused people to look askance at the theoretical and speculative nature of theology and creeds.”⁷ Accordingly, as we grew accustomed to religious differences, we evolved our characteristic, novel, and historically necessary principle of the *separation of church and state*. This peculiarly American arrangement helped to accelerate the *secularization* process that Philip Schaff noted even in 1848: “The secular interests, sciences, arts, governments, and social life have become since the Reformation always more and more dissociated from the Church.”⁸

On the other hand, during these years church people had acquired the habit, aided and abetted both by revivalism and by the gifts of rich philanthropists, of organizing independent agencies for the furthering of all sorts of good causes. Even the foreign-mission enterprise was in a number of instances separately organized, making its own corporate appeal to local churches. Only tardily did many societies come under denominational control. During the first half of the nineteenth century there were no less than eight large societies, with large membership, undenominational in their character but largely supported by church people, which one historian of the period says constituted a benevolent “empire.”⁹ Intended to influence the political, economic, and social order, they sought to further a variety of good causes and needed reforms (peace, temperance, the abolition of slavery, etc.); but they were independent agencies, not associated with the ecclesiastical

process. "As extrachurch agencies, the voluntary societies were explicitly designed to overcome the disadvantages of the denominational system, and to provide an opportunity for Christians to unite in matters of common concern."¹⁰ Though providing a "new feeling of solidarity," and often called *interdenominational*, they were technically *undenominational* societies. In a sense, the social gospel was actively preached by the characteristic revivalist, but "social action" as a function of organized church life was to take on new significance a century later.

The decades succeeding the Civil War involved increased sectarianism and division. In spite of the impact of *industrialization and urbanization*, and their consequences for rural life, not until early in the present century did serious concern for the condition of the churches in rural America cause a definite swing toward rural church cooperation. Both rural and urban church cooperation had their beginnings soon after 1880.

A Common Book, Allied Service

The religionists of 1850 had far less to do with one another ecclesiastically than they have now. To be sure, the American Bible Society had been organized in 1816, after the still earlier organization of certain state societies, "for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures without note or comment"—a necessary restriction in those days.¹¹ Moreover, "a Lutheran leader, Samuel Schmucker, as early as 1838 (had) issued a fraternal appeal to the American churches urging an 'alliance' of the several Protestant bodies which would not disturb their denominational organization and would enable them to render united Service . . . He reissued the appeal in 1870."¹² Thus early was the idea of some sort of "federal" unity for practical cooperation enunciated in the midst of the more isolationist denominational loyalties so characteristic of America.

Outstanding *lay developments* in the field of religious cooperation included the Young Men's and the Young Women's Christian Associations, neither of which became assimilated to the ecclesiastical process. On the contrary, their freedom from formal church control had its distinct advantages, for flexibility of organization and program, specialized service to age and sex groups and to the community, and cooperation with other non-ecclesiastical agencies. In 1850 there was as yet no YMCA in our entire nation. (So much the more, therefore, does the organization of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor in 1881 seem a surprisingly early harbinger of all that is now taken for

granted by denominational youth fellowships and by their associated efforts in the United Christian Youth Movement.)

The sixth decade of the nineteenth century was a dynamic period. "Whereas in 1850 plank roads, canals, river boats, and scattered short rail-lines provided haphazard communication and transportation, by the end of the decade more than 30,000 miles of rails connected the major regions of the continent except the Pacific Coast. In 1861 a transcontinental telegraph line was completed . . . (Chicago) . . . trebled its population, to pass the 100,000 mark by 1860. . . ." ¹³ Pennsylvania's first commercial oil well was opened in 1859. From 1852 to 1860 there was rapid growth in antislavery sentiment.

For the YMCA (which took root in America in 1851) and the Sunday School Movement the consequences of the revival of 1857-8 were far reaching. It involved "a large measure of lay activity, a phenomenon which increasingly became a part of the American religious pattern." ¹⁴ "Revivalism brought the layman into his own as he had not been since the first century. . . . The nineteenth century in America was the age of the lay worker in religion quite as much as it was the day of the common man on the democratic stage." Moreover, "revivalism was essentially above denominationalism. The evangelists tended to ignore sectarian walls and play down denominational distinctions." ¹⁵

This was all the more significant at a time when—as one who was then a young man was to remember the situation half a century later—"Sectarian" jealousies were fierce; ministers of the different churches were hardly on speaking terms; an exchange of pulpits was a thing never heard of." ¹⁶

The decade of the Civil War presented the churches both opportunities for cooperation and many difficulties. The American Christian Commission would long prove helpful to the cause of church cooperation. ¹⁷ On the other hand, during the war "congregations dwindled, the Sunday schools were decimated, the whole work of the church seemed to come to a sudden pause." ¹⁸ How the Christian forces of the nation sought to serve the men in uniform, and civilians caught in war-time emergencies, would be a story worth linking up with the growth of church cooperation and its prompt expression in later conflicts.

Not until 1874 was the WCTU to be organized, the Anti-Saloon League not until 1893. The Student Volunteer Movement began in 1886; the World Student Christian Federation in 1895. These latter were non-denominational associations, made up of interested individuals.

Quasi-Ecclesiastical Ministerial Experiments

Ministerial alliances, especially when officered by men who took their opportunity seriously, while primarily fraternal and professional, not representative of the churches as such, and therefore without ecclesiastical standing, were frequently more enduring, and less ephemeral in their local influence, than some of the national movements.¹⁹

Rhode Island's "*Westerly Plan*" began in 1870 when "seven pastors, from Seventh Day Baptist to Episcopalian . . . had their pictures taken together to prove that 'the Church of Christ in Westerly, R.I., is one,' "²⁰ "though meeting, for reasons, historical and practical, in seven congregations."²¹ This plan, Dr. E. Tallmadge Root reported to the Federal Council in 1908, as chairman of its Committee on State Federations, "assumes that the pastors ex officio represent the churches, and may, without formal authorization, organize and act in their names. In some cases, such a ministerial body has even adopted the name 'Federated Churches.' The advantage of this plan is its simplicity and economy of time and organization. Pastors know what is needed, and it can be done with less discussion. The success and permanence of the plan, however, depends on the personality and mutual confidence of the ministers."

Similar developments, ministerially, were to take place in the more metropolitan centers. As early as 1885, "*The Baltimore Ministerial Union* . . . announced its purposes and limitations as: 'The cultivation of a more intimate acquaintance and the promotion of fraternal feeling among the various evangelical bodies, the discussion of questions affecting the general Christian life of our city, and the securing of united action in evangelical and moral enterprises. No matter affecting the distinguishing practices or tenets of any denomination or church represented in the Union shall at any time be brought forward for discussion or action unless by unanimous consent.' "²²

This natural proclivity on the part of pastors to pioneer in church cooperation had then and still tends to exhibit a lack of faith in the cooperativeness of lay Christians, and a certain clerical exclusiveness from which the ecumenical movement seeks to escape. For example, "*the Chicago Federation* in its earliest phase included no laymen, its membership consisting of delegates from cooperating denominational ministerial associations. It was therefore a federation, neither of churches nor denominations, but simply of ministers."²³

Though it is true, as is frequently held, that in many communities "ministerial association provided the original basis for councils of churches," it is equally true that in the nineteenth as in the twentieth century ministerial associations have often resisted the organization of councils of churches, for a variety of reasons, including a sincere feeling that ministers themselves could adequately handle all necessary and desirable church cooperation.

Genuine Church Federation Beginnings

Massachusetts meanwhile presented "*Methuen's Method*." A sketch of the history of The Christian League of Methuen from 1887 to 1897 includes its constitution as adopted in 1888. Here "the churches join the League by formal vote, and agree to certain lines of cooperation, as stated union meetings, a periodic canvass, etc. They may appoint pastor and delegates to constitute the voting body; or all the members of the churches may be entitled to vote at its annual meeting. The advantage of the plan is that it commits the churches themselves, and renders permanence less dependent on the personality of pastors."²⁴ This simple structure, called by Dr. Root "perhaps the oldest local federation in the country," seems to have survived continuously for more than seven decades. (Novel as all such beginnings were, they are now matched by many hundreds of local councils of churches, simply organized, and operating under volunteer leadership, many of them in places like Methuen, with a 1950 population of less than 25,000.)

The Ecclesiastical Imagination of a Social Prophet

As early as 1866 "Henry Clay Trumbull, then in charge of the New England Department of the American Sunday School Union . . . in his tours, especially through the rural towns of Connecticut, had been deeply impressed with the needs of interdenominational comity and the federation of Christian forces."²⁵

Yet, says Mark Rich, no "general awakening to the distress of the rural church . . . registered itself in the literature or institutions of the day." From the standpoint of comity, rural churches, and statewide church federation, Washington Gladden's writing in *The Century Magazine* in 1882-3 was widely influential. His "fictionalized serial, 'The Christian League of Connecticut,' . . . first conceived as a single article, . . . (then) extended to four," finally resulted in a little volume of 192 pages. "His dealing with the principle and means of unity in the community, with spiritual fellowship among the denominations and a cooperative program for community improvement evoked a spontaneous response."²⁶

It is significant that the writing of these articles stemmed from a request of Mr. Roswell Smith, president of *The Century Magazine*, who had said to Dr. Gladden, then pastor of the North Congregational Church in Springfield, Mass., "I want you to write a kind of a story showing how the people in some New England town got together and united their forces in practical Christian work." This was still the century of lay initiative.²⁷ It is perhaps no accident, however, that a pastor who had written "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee" in 1879 should so soon sketch ways in which leaders in many churches could walk together in the community with their One Lord.

Washington Gladden looked forward: "The measure of unity to which the churches have already attained is by no means to be despised; their relations are vastly better than they were forty years ago, when Presbyterians and Congregationalists had no more dealings with Methodists or Baptists than the Jews once had with the Samaritans; when keen contempt and bitter abuse were common currency among the sects. . . . The spiritual unity to which we have attained, though not worthless, is ridiculously inadequate to the present need of the Church; and the organic unity for which we are exhorted to labor, though it may not be impossible, is yet a long way off. Is there not somewhere between the emotional fellowship of the present and the organized ecclesiasticism of the future, a measure of cooperation that is desirable and attainable?"²⁸

Gladden was convinced that in 1883 it could be said, "We have reached a period of reconstruction and synthesis."²⁹ His imaginative writing was to have far more influence in subsequent developments than some seem to have realized. The details of the organization of a local Christian League, then of County Leagues, and finally of a State League, need not concern us. The story is fanciful, high-handed, visionary, headed in the right direction, and contagious in its idealism. Much of it is now standard practice among all cooperative Protestants. Divine discontent was beginning to mount: "The improvement of the social relations of the churches is a great gain; it signifies more to have the people meet in this friendly way, and show each other neighborly courtesies, than to have them talk the cant of Christian union now and then in a prayer-meeting—but it is not enough."³⁰

A host pastor, in entertaining the League, is said to have confronted it with possible new techniques of church extension, common enough now, but unprecedented then: "The town is growing rapidly; other religious organizations will be needed; strife may arise among the denominations for the occupancy of new fields. Is it not possible

for a band of Christian men, representing all the churches, to exert an influence which shall lead to the amicable adjustment of all such questions?"

When one reads this little volume, even "the Westerly Way" seems less original. One of Dr. Gladden's characters, Captain Conover, a Baptist, is made to say, "The fact is that we haven't got but one church here in New Albion. There are several different meetin'-houses, and several different congregations, and they have various ways of workin' and worshipin', but there ain't but one church." Were Gladden and the Captain quoting Westerly, or were Westerly and Root quoting Gladden? Or were these words part of the folklore of the period?

In the light of the Gladden proposals, the Methuen story also needs an added word. Speaking informally at the first meeting of the Federal Council, Dr. Root said,³¹ "Some years ago a young man had read Dr. Washington Gladden's book, *The Christian League of Connecticut*. . . . In his new pastorate he at once proposed the organization of a Christian League of Methuen."

The effect of Gladden's writing on what was to happen in Maine is even clearer. In villages that were losing population, many of Maine's churches were impoverished.³² Mark Rich tells how "Methodist Rev. Charles S. Cummings, a fraternal delegate to the 1890 Congregational Conference of Maine, quoted from Washington Gladden's *The Christian League of Connecticut*; the idea of cooperation flamed. President William DeWitt Hyde of Bowdoin College . . . found the ideas so congenial to his previous thinking that he got a Committee on Conference appointed by his own denomination. Representatives of other denominations were invited to a meeting at Brunswick where 'with rare tact and judgment . . . he with his associates set in motion the machinery which in 1891 brought together in Waterville accredited representatives of the five leading denominations in Maine—Congregational, Christian, Baptist, Free Baptist, and Methodist; and then was created the *Interdenominational Commission of Maine*, the first federation, or interchurch organization, within a state, to be formed in the United States, if not in the world.' "³³

According to Dr. Sanford,³⁴ some time in the 1880's an "American Congress of Churches . . . held two meetings . . . and then . . . came to a sudden end." Perhaps these were the days to dream and hope, with national action still in the future.

Revivalism Characteristic

Among emphases characteristic of nineteenth-century religion in America were *revivalism* and the Sunday School Movement. Chapter II is devoted to the latter, which was in some sense a competitor of revivalism, though a sturdy ally of evangelism. According to one historian of Home Missions in America, it was "in revivalism (that) Protestantism found the key that unlocked the century."³⁵ Another student of American church life went further: "For two hundred years a conventional revivalism was the chief external feature of American Protestantism."³⁶ Periodic in the eighteenth century, revivalism became dominant in the nineteenth.³⁷ Recurrent, discontinuous, often ecclesiastically independent, revivalism reflected widespread interest on the part of many churches and their leaders, but not all. In any case, "successive waves of revivalism made for a common pattern that cut across denominational lines."³⁸ The modified type of revivalism exemplified during the latter part of the century by the great lay evangelist Dwight L. Moody, whatever its limitations, "was superb for ending denominational warfare."³⁹

Home Missions and Social Change

An "upsurge of denominational consciousness (appears to have been) characteristic of many Protestant churches in America during the middle of the nineteenth century. (Even) the church boards based upon a congregational order . . . began to feel their need for intensified fellowship and cooperation within their own denominational circles."⁴⁰ This affected foreign as well as home missions. (Such a development is readily understandable in the light of the current increase in world confessionalism at the very time that church cooperation has arrived at the planetary stage.)

In contrast both to revivalism and the Sunday School Movement, in their more massive aspects, "nineteenth century *home missions* was strongly denominational in character," exhibiting a "tendency to proliferate agencies." "Women's national denominational societies" contributed "a further complicating factor."⁴¹ But, according to its latest chronicler, "this complex movement . . . succeeded brilliantly in its main effort. In a century that saw the population increase roughly fourteen times, the proportion of church members in the total population rose from less than ten to over thirty percent." There was "one church for every 1,740 inhabitants in 1800, and for every 895 in 1850."⁴² In 1850, however, only sixteen percent of the people were

affiliated with any form of organized religion, as compared with sixty-one percent in 1957.

"Profound social changes were concentrated in the great cities, with their rapid growth and their puzzling combinations of interdependence and depersonalization." In fact, "urbanization . . . brought to the church 'the greatest inner revolution it has ever known,' " as the dean of America's urban church studies put it.⁴⁴

"Mushrooming cities were as much in need of evangelization as the Western frontiers in an early day;" yet "the missionary movement was slow in regrouping its forces and reorienting its thinking." This now became imperative, however, for all organized religion "was soon to see other new and stronger frontiers . . . emerging." Accordingly religion, like the nation, was forced to turn back on itself and consider new beginnings. "The impact of scientific and historical thinking," moreover, meant that "the denominations confronted simultaneously new social situations and new patterns of thought." In the midst of such sudden change "Home Missions was driven to find new strategies."

Once the spanning of the continent by the railroads had seemed a precarious dream, the laying of a transoceanic cable a hazardous adventure. Now wonders began to multiply. Radio was not yet, television was undreamed of, but by 1876 both the telegraph and the telephone were a reality. Who would have dared to predict that the descendants of pioneers would so soon cross the continent by air in fewer hours than the months it had taken their forebears by ox-cart?⁴⁵

The Evangelical Alliance Breaks the Trail

The isolationism of language groups was being challenged, and there had been valiant efforts to bridge the social distance between the contrasting denominational heritages, with their differences of creed, cultus, and polity. Organized Protestant cooperation's "most immediate forerunner" in America was the Evangelical Alliance. Because of the rise of this movement, Dr. Schmucker, who had been arranging to send out a call for a Conference of American Churches, gave up the further prosecution of his "Plan for Protestant Union on Apostolic Principles," which had received the endorsement of five major denominational bodies. But his 1838 "Fraternal Appeal" had given him such recognition in different churches and countries that at the 1846 London meeting one Irish leader dubbed him "the father of the Alliance."⁴⁶

Established in 1846 in London, the Alliance "was nationally organized in the United States in 1867. . . . Under its auspices local Alliances were organized in various states and cities, and interchurch cooperation, both in its evangelistic and social service aspects, was invited."⁴⁷ Though the Alliance "was an organization of individual Christians, without any organized attempt at reaching the churches as official bodies, as this was not then considered practical,"⁴⁸ it nevertheless "did, as a matter of fact, within a limited sphere, speak and act . . . for American Evangelical Christianity."⁴⁹ An 1846 credal statement, issued as a guide for determining Alliance membership, included "the utter depravity of human nature in consequence of the fall." Theologically rigid, according to our standards, "for the churches as they emerged from the Civil War it was a specially fitting instrument. Denominational consciousness ran high; a more militant organization for church unity could not have maintained the confidence of the denominations."⁵⁰ In 1873 the Alliance held a "remarkable and significant meeting" in New York, as the result of "the tireless labors of Rev. Philip Schaff, prophet and pioneer of Christian unity."⁵¹

Religion Rediscovered the Social Order

In contrast with earlier independent organizational attacks on social problems, of a sort that continue until now, especially under secular auspices, the social implications of the gospel, and particularly their consequences for churchmanship and the ecclesiastical process as such, began now to find new spokesmen.

In 1883 Canon Freemantle, in his Bampton Lectures, spoke on "The World as the Subject of Redemption." The publication of *Our Country* by Josiah Strong in 1885 (to be followed later by *The Challenge of the City*) was undoubtedly a major influence in awakening many church leaders to the social and urban significance of Christianity and of the consequent need for church cooperation.⁵² From 1886 to 1898 Strong served as the full-time general secretary of the World Alliance, which in 1887 called a meeting in Washington of all "evangelical Christians in the United States." Three questions were there considered: "1. What are the present perils and opportunities of the Christian church and of the country? 2. Can any of them be met best by hearty cooperation of all evangelical Christians, which, without detriment to any denominational interests, will serve the welfare of the whole church? 3. What are the best means to secure such cooperation and to awaken the whole church to its responsibility?"⁵³ The Church, like other aspects of our culture, was now no longer able to think of persons

as isolated human units, for "by the Eighteen-Nineties the individual was dwarfed by the organization of business, finance, and politics on a grand scale."⁵⁴ The rise of psychology and sociology was also soon to underscore the social nature of personality.

By the time of the 1892 Chicago meeting of the Alliance " 'social problems' . . . were taking a larger place than ever before." The churches are now unquestionably developing "a growing awareness . . . that they cannot deal effectively in isolation with many of the social factors of community life upon which the Gospel must be brought to bear."⁵⁵ Meanwhile by 1890-91 the Interdenominational Commission of Maine had come into being; and in 1888 a preliminary conference, including representatives of several denominational mission societies, had been held in *New York* to consider religious conditions in that city. The widespread local interest in practical church cooperation was reflected in the 1890 report of the field secretary of the Alliance that 1,888 meetings had been held in 52 cities in 18 states.⁵⁶

Aspiration and Experiment

In 1892 an unsuccessful effort was made to secure a conference of representatives of home-mission societies of a number of denominations.⁵⁷ A "proposal of the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip in 1891 resulted in the formulation of a constitution which provided for a 'Federal Council' of officially appointed representatives of brotherhoods. A first convention was held at the Marble Collegiate Church in New York in 1893."⁵⁸ That more did not come from such efforts may be due in part to the "hard times" that began in 1893. But that year was one of cultural progress as well as difficulty. By 1893, too, the Foreign Mission boards, the first of which had been organized in 1810, had begun to confer; and at a great conference at Carnegie Hall in 1900 they were to use the word "ecumenical." Later (in 1911) the Foreign Missions Conference of North America would be organized.

In America as in Europe it was the foreign missions movement, whether denominationally organized or interdenominationally cooperative, together with its powerful allies, which first caught the ecumenical vision, as contrasted with the merely cooperative ideal within any given area. These allies in time included various aspects of the Student Christian Movement, the Student Volunteer Movement, the great Christian Associations, the Laymen's Missionary Movement, and the tremendous interest of church women in the world mission of the Church. It is significant, also, that the "centennial celebration of the

Williams College 'Haystack Meeting' in 1906 at Williamstown" occurred two years before the organization of the Federal Council.⁵⁹

Dr. Philip Schaff, of the Reformed Church in the U.S., "at a meeting of the Alliance in Chicago coincidentally with the World's Parliament of Religions in connection with the Columbian Exposition in 1893, in his address on 'The Reunion of Christendom,' . . . declared for a federal type of union, defined as follows: 'Federal . . . union is a voluntary association of different churches in their official capacity, each retaining its freedom and independence in the management of its internal affairs, but all recognizing one another as sisters with equal rights, and cooperating in general enterprises, such as the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad, the defense of the faith against infidelity, the elevation of the poor and neglected classes of society, works of philanthropy and charity, and moral reform.'"⁶⁰

Having "opened up the way for the churches" to act in the field of social problems, the Alliance now began to relinquish its aggressiveness in this field. Meanwhile there had been a significant development in "institutional churches," which seemed to Elias Sanford to provide a new approach to interdenominational fellowship; "and under his inspiration *The Open and Institutional Church League* was organized in 1894."⁶¹ Leaders in this enterprise were Dr. Charles L. Thompson, pastor of the Madison Ave. Presbyterian Church, and later the first president of the Home Missions Council, and Dr. Frank Mason North, of the New York City Church Extension and Missionary Society of the M.E. Church. Dr. Sanford was elected secretary in 1895. Gaylord S. White of the Union Settlement, first secretary of the League, was later elected vice president.

The cumbersome name of this body reflects the slow transition from the now almost forgotten practice of pew rentals and firmly assigned seats to a more cordial and democratic attitude toward the stranger and newcomer, and a less rigid sense of proprietorship on the part of members who had once been literally pew "owners." This new League championed "Christian unity as a spiritual reality and as a practical factor, bringing the denominations into federative relations through which they can work out the problems of Christian service in city, country, and abroad, without the present waste of forces." "Of this word 'institutional,' Dr. Josiah Strong once aptly said, 'It is a word we all dislike but all have to use.'"⁶²

The general story of the rise of the "social gospel" is familiar, and has been ably told.⁶³ It began to provide a third approach to religion,

in addition to revivalism ⁶⁴ and the Sunday school, as the nineteenth century drew to a close; and was a major factor in conditioning the atmosphere in which church cooperation, local, state, national, and world-wide, now developed with such relative rapidity.

Metropolitan Experimentation

In New York an East Side Federation of Churches, organized in 1894, "gave the impulse that brought about the founding, the following year, of the City Federation."⁶⁵ Accordingly by 1895 the Federation of Churches and Christian Workers of New York City first blazed a trail in a metropolitan city that had already been pioneered in a more modest way in the smaller New England communities already cited. By 1898 Wisconsin was experimenting with its first Federation of Reforms; and in 1899 Vermont's Interdenominational Commission was under way.

While the one urban example that soon dominated national thinking, the New York City Federation, was in the end to prove as atypical as was the metropolis itself, it provided a concrete demonstration of one way of tackling the interdenominational urban problem, in its most advanced and complicated form. Beginnings elsewhere would have to be as different as the many cities now sensing the need of cooperative churchmanship. Meanwhile New York City afforded a base of operations, and its Federation, it was felt, "illustrated the spirit, methods, and purpose of local cooperative service which we believe a national organization would do much to foster and advance in other cities and communities." At the outset New York, under the exceptional leadership of Dr. Walter Laidlaw, had concentrated on acquiring "a comprehensive knowledge of facts" according to scientific methods. This quest had a profound influence on federal census procedures, and decades later was to become standard procedure for all well-engineered church cooperation. At first, however, it was so far ahead of average ecclesiastical comprehension as to seem somewhat eccentric; also sufficiently expert and detailed to be prophetic of later nation-wide urban studies. Of the New York City Federation Dean George S. Hodges of Cambridge said, "This and similiar movements are in the right direction. . . . Cooperation is not enough and does not satisfy our prayers, but it is at least a long step up the hard hill, and it is possible tomorrow."⁶⁶

National Contagion

By 1898, when a religious newspaper reported that in a Missouri town with 600 inhabitants and three churches (Congregational, Meth-

odist, and Baptist), two branches of another denomination were coming in to organize new churches, everybody was properly scandalized⁶⁷; and the name of the town might just as well have been Legion, in almost any state. Yet leaders were endeavoring both to push forward and to keep their feet on the ground. To men like Sanford it seemed that "Organic unity is still a dream of the future. Federation is a present reality. The churches of the community are the Church of the community."⁶⁸

An undated New York Federation publication, listing Dr. Sanford as for the time being a staff associate of Dr. Laidlaw, sought thus to indicate the need, purpose, and work of a national federation:

"Widespread interest in many parts of the country is crystallizing into purpose and effort to form local federations. The call is increasing for the aid of an organization that will give all the help possible to those who desire information regarding the work that others have done and are doing along federative lines. A national organization would best provide the facilities that would place at the disposal of every community and interested person the literature and guidance that would be helpful both in the founding and development of Local and State Federations.

"Already a considerable number of Local Federations are in existence and others in process of formation. These organizations join in an earnest request that a bond of union be supplied that will enable them to come into closer relation with each other for the interchange of thought and suggestion on matters of common interest. For this reason they advocate the formation of a National Federation.

"The Federation would be only advisory in its plans and purposes. It is reasonable, however, to expect that, without the slightest interference with denominational or local church autonomy or affairs, it would, as a national organization, exert a very strong and helpful influence in advancing the spirit of Christian comity and cooperation that is already a hopeful sign of the hour."

Was this wishful thinking? How widespread was the demand, how profound the urge? Did New York really have its fingers on the pulse of American Protestantism? How hearty would be the response? In any case, according to this claim, "the field" was asking for cooperation nationally, i.e., a national federation. Likewise it is now evident not only that local councils preceded the establishment of the national body, but also that the national body, once it was organ-

ized, would in turn stimulate "the establishment of more local councils and the growth of some of those councils already in existence."⁶⁹ In thus exercising hindsight, however, we are running ahead of the story. (Centuries from now church historians may still differ as to whether the initial instances of local and state church cooperation accelerated national and world interdenominational organization more or less than they were themselves strengthened by these larger forces. Doubtless it was a two-way stream.)

The competent contemporary historian may well regard this first chapter as a quite amateurish prelude to what follows; the scholarly reader will do well to substitute for it any more adequate frame of reference available to him. We twentieth century cooperative American Christians stand on the shoulders of many a previous epoch. The top-most of these is that long dynamic century between the American Revolution and the Spanish-American War. Accordingly the more ecclesiastical aspects of nineteenth century Protestantism in America, with particular reference to church cooperation, have been briefly presented. Ecumenical opportunity had by 1900 become ecumenical necessity, and an increasing number of church leaders were alive to this change. With the coming of the new century, change will accelerate.

Meanwhile Chapter II will concentrate on a most significant aspect of American church life, the Sunday school, and its consequences for Christian cooperation.

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- ³ Mark Rich, *The Rural Church Movement*, Juniper Knoll Press, 1957, pp. 5, 9, 16. Used by permission.
- ⁴ Hutchison, *We Are Not Divided*, Round Table Press, 1941, p. 8. Used by permission.
- ⁵ Rich, *op. cit.* pp. 13, 16, 21.
- ⁶ H. Paul Douglass, *Christian Unity Movements in the U.S.*, Institute for Social and Religious Research, 1934, p. 30.
- ⁷ Hutchison, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
- ⁸ Quoted in Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, Federal Council of Churches, 1948, p. 13.
- ⁹ See particularly, Gilbert Barnes, *The Anti-Slavery Impulse, 1830-1844*, Appleton-Century, 1933; especially Chapter II on "The New York Philanthropists."
- ¹⁰ "As extrachurch agencies, the voluntary societies were explicitly designed to overcome the disadvantages of the denominational system and to provide an opportunity for Christians to unite in matters of common concern." Though providing a "new feeling of solidarity," and often called interdenominational, they were technically undenominational societies. Winthrop S. Hudson, *The Great Tradition of the American Churches*, Harper, 1953, p. 77. Prof. Hudson ably sets forth both the greatness and the weakness of organized Protestantism in American life; his volume will provide the reader with excellent collateral reading.
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- ¹² *Ibid.*, p. 19; also his *Christian Unity in Practice and Prophecy*, Macmillan, 1933, p. 36.
Likewise, Prof. John W. Nevin, of the faculty of the Mercersburg Theological Seminary (Reformed Church in the U.S.), a denominational representative on the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions from 1840 to 1865, has been called by R. Pearce Beaver "the great father of the Mercersburg Movement (in the German Reformed Church)—the most important native American contribution to ecumenical thinking in the nineteenth century." (Quoted by Fred Field Goodsell, in *You Shall Be My Witnesses*, ABCFM, 1959, p. 136 note.)
- ¹³ C. Howard Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in America*, Association Press, 1951, p. 12. Used by permission.
- ¹⁴ Hutchison, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
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- ¹⁶ Washington Gladden, *Recollections*, Houghton Mifflin, 1909, p. 34.
- ¹⁷ According to Winthrop S. Hudson, there is ground for believing that the whole grass-roots organizational development "was sparked by the sociological studies of the religious needs of the cities by the American Christian Commission during the late 1860's and the 1870's, for the need for united action was constantly stressed and numerous proposals were offered and implemented." Personal letter, December 15, 1959.
- ¹⁸ Gladden, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

- 19 Just when and where, in the nineteenth century, ministers were interdenominationally associated, and how effectively, would make an excellent topic for a doctoral dissertation. Did ministers pioneer church cooperation or thwart it? To what extent? Doubtless documentary evidence could be discovered supporting quite different impressions as to what actually happened before 1900 among the clergy of America. Mass revivals afforded opportunity for frequent and widespread cooperation.
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- 45 A January, 1928, Omaha interchurch bulletin noted that "some men who came west in covered wagons have lived to see mail planes flying over their heads."
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- ⁵⁰ Hutchison, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
- ⁵¹ FC 1913 Report, Resolution, p. 55; cf. also Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, pp. 19 ff.
- ⁵² Cf. Winthrop S. Hudson: "The Evangelical Alliance was organized in some cities on a local basis, and in some of these cities the monthly house-to-house visitation proposed by Josiah Strong was carried out by these local Alliances" (personal letter, previously cited).
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- ⁵⁷ Handy, *op. cit.*, pp. 13, 14.
- ⁵⁸ Macfarland in *American Journal of Theology*, Vol. 21, No. 1, July, 1917, from Notes by Dr. Roy B. Guild, Cf. also *Progress of Church Federation*, p. 29.
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The Sunday School Movement

In The United States

Prophetic Movement

It would be difficult to exaggerate the part the Sunday school movement has played in educating American Protestantism for more effectiveness in the Christian nurture aspect of their churchmanship, now recognized as central for persons of all ages. As contrasted with the missionary and student movement origins of European ecumenicity, the most conspicuous forerunner of later American church cooperation at the state and local levels was the Sunday school movement. This persistently lay enterprise, which for many decades was undenominational, by substantially supplementing Protestantism as denominationally organized had become a chief precursor of American ecumenicity.

Earliest Beginnings

Francis Asbury established a Sunday School in Hanover County, Virginia, in 1786.¹ Sunday schools were started in Philadelphia and Boston in 1791, in New York City in 1793, in Paterson in 1794, in Pawtucket in 1797, and in Pittsburgh in 1800.²

A marker at Greensboro, Vt., commemorates "the first Sunday School *Convention* in New England, June 25, 1817." There were Sunday School "Unions" in New York, Brooklyn, and Boston as early as 1816, in Philadelphia in 1817.³ Numerous local, county, and city conventions were held about 1820. The American Sunday School Union was organized in 1824.

The Sunday school enterprise, which had quickly gained support from enthusiastic lay persons, was met with initial indifference, apathy, or even open hostility on the part of some clergy. Many church leaders viewed it with open concern, partly because it so often proceeded without getting permission from the ministers, and did not involve itself in the regular denominational procedures.

Soon the Methodist Sunday School Union and similar denominational bodies were also organized. Sunday schools, too, soon tended to "become parts of churches, and came under denominational care." By 1829 even the early publication work of the American Sunday School Union proved "no longer indispensable."⁴

State and Local Conventions and Organizations Before 1832⁵

Connecticut had a convention as early as 1825; but not until 1857 did it hold its first regular state convention. (In then electing H. Clay Trumbull as state secretary, with particular attention to Hartford institutes, Connecticut pioneered both a standard statistical process and the important leadership education aspect of the Sunday School Movement.) State "Unions" were organized in Connecticut (1825), in Maryland (1844 or 1846), Wisconsin (1846), and Massachusetts (1854)—but their history was not always to be continuous. For example, in 1889, thirty-five years later, Massachusetts had to be entirely reorganized. New York got an association permanently under way in 1856 or 1857, Connecticut in 1857, New Jersey in 1858; in 1859 Illinois, Minnesota, and Ohio were also permanently organized as convention-holding states that were to evolve Sunday school associations.

As early as 1846 *county* conventions were held in Pike and Scott Counties in Illinois, and by 1856 townships in that state were being organized "to ensure good county work." By 1865 Illinois had 102 counties organized, each with a secretary and a convention. New Jersey had also provided for a secretary in each county.

The permanent nation-wide movement was clearly an outgrowth of these state, county, and township developments, as well as a source of organizing inspiration for them.⁶

First National Conventions

Full visibility for the Sunday school movement was achieved at the exceptionally representative⁷ First National Sunday School Convention, held in New York in 1832, at a time when "Chicago, the second city of the United States, was yet unborn."⁸ No nation-wide overhead promotion followed. By and large, "the denominations had not yet discovered the Sunday school, except as a customer for printed goods."⁴ Twenty-seven years elapsed before the next national convention, in 1859 at Philadelphia. The 1859 Convention came immediately after the 1857 revival period, and gathered up the momentum of state and local developments.⁴ A committee appointed to plan for 1861 could not know that there would be a long interruption of all national meetings. Here, however, in Philadelphia in 1859 were the beginnings of The International Sunday School Association, as distinguished from a mere series of conventions.⁴ It would be another forty years before corporate responsibility would be taken seriously enough to call for the election of a general secretary.

National progress in the Sunday school as in other movements was of course seriously interrupted by the Civil War; but state Sunday school bodies continued to take shape. In 1859 there was spirited discussion over the use of the words "in connection with the teachings of the Family and the Pulpit" in a resolution approving the Sunday school.⁹ But, "the clause was retained, and the Sunday school brought yet closer to the other departments of the Christian Church." The 1869 Convention, postponed from 1861, held at Newark, N. J., was intended to be "a mass convention, open alike to all who come, but every state convention, by its executive committee, (was) invited to send a delegation, not to exceed twice the representation of the State in both houses of Congress;" and it was expected that these delegates would "probably hold a business session at some time during the Convention."¹⁰

By 1869 there were nineteen organized states:

*	—Maryland	1862	—Pennsylvania
1854 or 1855	—Massachusetts	1864 or 1865	—Indiana
1856 or 1857	—New York	1865	—Iowa
1857	—Connecticut	1865	—Kentucky
1858	—New Jersey	1865 or 1866	—Missouri
1859	—Illinois		(possibly 1859)
1859	—Minnesota	1866	—Kansas
1859	—Ohio	1867 or 1868	—Nebraska
1860	—Michigan	1868 or 1869	—Maine
1860	—Wisconsin	1869	—Vermont

* The Maryland Sunday School Union, organized in 1844 or 1846, seems to have cooperated with the national Sunday school forces from the outset, but not until 1904 did it become an auxiliary of the International Sunday School Association. (Other states also had Sunday school unions before their associations were organized.)

With the 1872 date set, and convention officers elected for the triennium 1869-1872, national Sunday school gatherings were now to be held every three years until 1914. The 1869 mood was significant for later ecumenical developments: "We rejoice in the spirit of Christian union that has been manifested by this Convention, demonstrating that whatever our denominational differences, we are one in Christ and in Christian work."¹¹

At Newark, in 1869, "no tolerance was given to the idea that the Sunday school was in any sense an institution independent of the Christian Church." Whatever may have been true half a century earlier,

or in the minds of some, the Sunday school was now well on its way to becoming part of that educational enterprise of the Church now known as the church school.

Permanent National Organization Effected, 1872

In 1872 a still more representative gathering convened at Indianapolis, in the heart of "the field." The significance of this midwestern location is better understood when it is remembered that "by the midpoint of the nineteenth century, the five states of the Northwest Territory alone—Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin—contained 4½ million souls, more than the entire population of the country in 1789."¹² Four decades had now passed since the first convention in 1832. The call for the 1872 Convention provided for credentials from the executive committees of the several state associations;¹³ actually, 254 delegates represented 22 states and one territory.

According to H. Clay Trumbull's interesting comparison, in his invaluable "Historical Introduction to the 1872 Convention Report,"⁹ "The individual power and responsibility of members was greater in the First Convention (1832) than in the Fifth (1872). The *representative* character of the delegates was weightier in the Fifth Convention than in the First. The action of the First Convention was chiefly for a constituency which had summoned it. In looking at the record of these two conventions, one is likely to be most impressed with the sagacity and foresight of the *men* who planned so wisely at the New York Convention in 1832, and with the magnitude of the *cause* represented by the assembled workers in Indianapolis in 1872. And the contrast indicates the growth of the Sunday school system in America during the last forty years. Who shall say what is to be its growth in the next forty years?" The corporate process had begun, a full generation before the more ecclesiastical forces were to develop the Federal Council of Churches.

This 1872 convention named a first salaried officer, E. Payson Porter of Illinois, as *statistical secretary*, on the basis of his record; but it would be another fifteen years before a paid official field secretary was to be added in 1887. Nevertheless, "The era of sporadic convention impulses was over."⁴ In 1872 the Uniform Lessons Committee, a chief by-product of the movement, began a half-century of helpful domination of the lesson-making process. Uniform lessons, which as late as 1940 constituted three-fifths of publishers' sales, have probably been of more value in the economy of the Kingdom than many are now able to realize.

By 1820, in spite of its earlier emphasis, first on secular subjects, then on the catechism, the Sunday school had become primarily a Bible school. (The denominations had some of the same problems in connection with the Bible Societies that they had in connection with the Sunday School Movement.) Extension was largely a "Union" responsibility, and in the earlier years sometimes overdone. Evangelism was central, as is clear from the state reports. Temperance and missions evoked enthusiastic loyalties. Mass conventions stressed inspiration; but the counties began to substitute institutes for mass meetings. (As early as 1860 Illinois was pioneering institutes at the local level.) The need for leadership was the occasion for the beginnings of leadership education ("teacher training," at first).

By the time the first "International" (i.e., including Canada) Convention was convened in Baltimore in 1875, twenty-one state Sunday school associations were under way, all of which survive as functional portions of state councils of churches, or as (in the sole case of Pennsylvania) a closely cooperating agency.

The International Convention Period, 1875-1899⁴

According to its early theory, each convention left behind it a committee to see to it that the next was held at the end of the triennium. Though the International Sunday School Association was organized in 1881, for nearly two decades it continued as essentially a series of conventions rather than as a body with a continuous program. From the outset, however, its executive committee exercised real power, and developed significant leaders. In 1881 B. F. Jacobs was made its chairman; it included representatives of each state, territorial, and provincial organization. Each convention was regarded as a separate entity. Costs were modest, but increasing.

"The first paid secretaries (sustained by the fields they worked for) were Samuel W. Clark in New Jersey and W. B. Jacobs in Illinois, both starting in 1882. In Maryland and New York State and possibly elsewhere there were missionaries in the field, sustained by their states and not by the American Sunday School Union."⁴

At Louisville in 1884 much field work was reported. All bills had been paid, and there was a balance on hand. At Chicago in 1887 too there was rejoicing over the tremendous amount of volunteer field work, and a *field superintendent* was soon to be employed at a "\$2,500 salary—a tenth of his previous income." The statistical secretary reported eight "banner states"—every county organized: *Connecticut*, Illinois,

Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania. (The three italicized were reported as completely organized by townships or districts, each county being a banner county.)

In 1890 at Pittsburgh, however, it was admitted that "Many of the states organized before had lapsed and needed complete rebuilding." By 1893 at St. Louis the field superintendent was able to report that only three states remained unorganized (Nevada, New Mexico, and Oklahoma Territory). But it had been difficult to maintain the state bodies in the late 1870's—while six new states were being reported between 1875 and 1878, five had lapsed. Likewise in the early 1880's there was a slight temporary loss, which seems to have been speedily recouped through staff increases. In 1893 eleven states were said to be "completely" organized: Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, and Ohio. The national objective was "an effective organization in every township of every county of every state and territory of this country and Canada," a goal worth remembering.

The proliferation of the work into subsidiary groups was now well under way. In 1884 a national Primary Union had been organized. In 1892 an International Field Workers' Association became the organizational beginning of what is now the Association of Council Secretaries; it gathered momentum in Boston in 1896.

The Period of the International Association, 1899-1920

The Atlanta 1899 Convention had marked effect on the whole South. Prof. H. M. Hamill was now made the field superintendent, and Marion Lawrence of Ohio was called to the new position of *general secretary*. Two Georgia ministers were employed for the colored work.¹⁵ Only now had "the intangible movement of 1875" become, in fact as well as in name, the International Sunday School *Association*,¹⁴ as distinguished from a mere series of conventions. Yet the term "Convention" was long retained, not only for legal purposes, but even as the designation of the body represented by the staff, often becoming a confusing but necessary legal anachronism.

The Denver 1902 Convention was significant for its effect on the West. Lingered opposition was still occasionally reported. Even in 1902 Texas called one of "the greatest difficulties to be overcome the indifference of the ministry (and) their allegiance to the old-fashioned revival meeting." Meanwhile the whole question of Christian nurture, raised as early as 1847 by Horace Bushnell's provocative volume, was

taking on new urgency. By 1903 the Religious Education Association began its noteworthy career, not as an administrative agency but as a climate-changing body, which spread enthusiasm for education and criticism of stereotyped procedures.

At Toronto in 1905 Dr. H. H. Bell declared, "I am delighted to be here because of the Personality we represent."¹⁶ Likewise Dr. Benjamin B. Tyler reminisced: "Twenty-four years ago, in this city, I attended an International Sunday School Convention. When we came to the registration booths the loved and lamented B. F. Jacobs was just in advance of me. When he was asked about his denominational connection nobody suspected that he was ashamed for a moment of his denominational label. He replied, 'Isn't it good enough in this place to be simply a Christian?'"¹⁷

At the 1905 Convention W. C. Pearce told how a county convention blackboard map, locating every Sunday school, had revealed a thickly inhabited territory ten miles wide and thirty miles long without a single Sunday school or church—a situation that, once seen, was quickly changed. This procedure appears to have been one of the forerunners of later comity and field research. But there seems to have been too little recognition of the desirability of thinning out the ranks in other too crowded fields.

Recent emphasis on mission and unity, and on Biblical theology, is forecast in remarks at this convention by Carey Bonner on William Carey, who dreamed, saw visions, and "learned something of God's plans:

1. God's love is not for a tribe but for the world.
2. Divine 'election' is to service.
3. The greatness of redemption consists not in what a church is saved *from*, but in what it is saved *to*."¹⁸

An important innovation had been the creation of a Department or Committee of Education in 1903 by the Executive Committee of the International Association.¹⁹ Since 1901 there had also been a Sunday School Editorial Association, denominationally constituted. By 1905 it "stands sponsor for a business that represents an investment of perhaps fifteen million dollars."²⁰ The vested interests of the denominations—not to mention undenominational private enterprise—were beginning to affect the corporate structures of the Christian education movement.

A significant resolution by the Central Committee, concerning "the relation of the International Sunday School work to the denominational," disavowed any intention on the part of the International to go into the publishing business, and pledged full cooperation rather than competition with the denominational publishing houses.²¹

In modest and irenic spirit, it was also asserted that "We must remember that the Sunday school is not the whole of the church, nor does it cover all the educational functions of the church."²² Yet there was pride in progress. It was reported that "Over 2,000 counties are organized (and) fully 10,000 townships and districts. At an estimated average of ten people each, there are 120,000 people in our field who are giving solid blocks of time to this work without any remuneration whatsoever."²³

But the national staff was also growing: by 1905 it included six executives, three stenographers, and special help.²⁴ Half a century ago the dream of the sort of ecumenical headquarters, which by 1959 had become a reality on New York's Morningside Heights, began to take shape. In 1905 it was felt that "the idea of an International Sunday School building (as suggested by the Executive Committee) is a good one, but we recommend that its disadvantages as well as its advantages be carefully considered and reported on at the next convention."²⁵ Actually, however, it was not until 1907 that the Association office was removed from the Lawrence home in Toledo to Chicago.

Increasing Corporate Strength

By virtue of the Association's incorporation by Congressional charter in 1907, when it was already twenty-six years old, "the members of (its) Executive Committee . . . became the members of the Association, responsible for its business and affairs," constitutionally.

At Louisville in 1908 expenses for the triennium had mounted to \$106,733, as staff, office, travel, and administrative costs increased.

One begins to hear an increasingly defensive note. There were obvious fears of "legislation," and already, even at this undenominational stage, the problem of "authority" began to raise an issue that would later be termed the threat of "super-church" imposition. A conciliatory resolution, introduced in 1908, was adopted;²⁶ but a clear crisis was already at hand. The retiring president spoke vigorously of Christian loyalties transcending denominational commitments.²⁷ There was candid differences of opinion as to the relative merits of "uniform" and "graded" lessons.²⁸

Quantitatively the movement was making progress. Three years before the Federal Council was organized, practically every state had a Sunday school association that was a going concern, and these were bound together in a strong national body. On the other hand, as of 1908-9, the Federal Council listed only sixteen state federations of churches, of which only Massachusetts had a paid secretary, a meager budget, and a continuous history under full-time professional direction. State association papers were now listed in the national report.²⁹ Likewise the enrollment figures for union Sunday schools—14,118 of them—seemed significant.³⁰ In fact these union schools were a matter of increasing concern to the denominations.

A total enrollment of approximately fifteen million for the Sunday schools of the nation, undenominationally reported for the most part, was probably less than the figures reported to the denominations.³¹ In 1914 it was said that 2,387 out of 3,034 counties were "organized"; in 1918, out of 3,069, there were 2,476. An undated publication recording "Half a Century of Growth and Service" asserted: "There are 63 State and Provincial Associations, approximately 10,000 Districts or Township Associations. The large cities have active Associations."

Growing Denominational Initiative

Behind this impressive quantitative strength the necessity for drastic change was already becoming evident. To be sure, even Dr. J. M. Frost, secretary of the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, spoke generously on³² denominational cooperation. Likewise, a United Brethren bishop gave eloquent testimony as to what we now call the ecumenical significance of the Sunday School Movement. Yet, in spite of far-flung organizational lines, and increased financial resources, all was not well.

This was a yeasty period of cooperative beginnings in America. The denominations were coming into new self-consciousness as the instigators and controllers of church cooperation. Within three years after the tardy incorporation of the International Sunday School Association in 1907, the whole interdenominational picture in America had perceptibly changed. In 1908 the organization of the Federal Council and of the Home Missions Councils emphasized the new determination of the denominations, as such, to work together. The Foreign Missions Conference, informally organized by denominational boards in 1893, was to be consolidated in 1911 into a more permanent and functionally significant body. Newly aware of their responsibility

in the field of education, the denominations were now strengthening their own agencies, while at the same time seeking to play a team game for the control of such hitherto maverick agencies as the Sunday school. The organization in 1910 of The Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations provided a fourth combination of denominational forces, functional and ecclesiastical. In a little more than a single critical decade, its crash program was to result in the significant merger of Sunday school "Council" and Sunday school "Association" forces at Kansas City in 1922, and the organization, on a new basis, of their combined strength in the International Council of Religious Education.

Between 1908 and 1914, particularly, says Dr. Arlo A. Brown, "a battle royal" was on" between the established International Sunday School Association representing the states and provinces, and the newly organized Sunday School Council, representing the denominations.³⁴ For interpretation of this determinative blitzkrieg we turn to a sympathetic and participant student of these changing patterns of power. Let E. Morris Fergusson tell the story as he prepared it in the sixth of "Ten Lessons" published in 1922 as a 25-page manual for association field workers.³⁵

"And now the denominations began to call the Association to account; just as they had done in the twenties of the last century with the Bible and Tract Societies and later with the American Sunday School Union, and in the eighties with the United Society of Christian Endeavor. The International Sunday School Association had challenged their leadership, and the challenge was ably met. In 1908 the Board of Sunday Schools was created by the Methodist Episcopal Church, superseding the Methodist Sunday School Union. Its secretaries³⁶ . . . called in question the right of the Association and the states to promote methods and standards in Methodist Episcopal Sunday schools without their sanction, and particularly objected to state normal courses, the enrollment and care of local training classes, and the certification of organized classes in their schools. In a conference held in Chicago in 1909 the bounds of activity between state and denominational agencies were agreed on. The denomination was to have charge of work in the local school; community work and work in union schools and those not denominationally supervised being left to the Association.

"In July 1910 the denominational Sunday school secretaries, editors, publishers, editorial leaders, and extension superintendents

came together and formed the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations, replacing the Editorial Association formed in 1901. It became a nucleus for the expression and fostering of the sense of denominational responsibility for Sunday school leadership. Many of its members were strong friends of association work; but they joined with those who emphasized denominational rights in the new spirit of question and audit as to the character and limits of proper association and state activity. Constructively, the Council contributed much to the progress of method, succeeding in some respects to the leadership of the Committee on Education. In 1911 at San Francisco a further issue was raised over the conduct of the Executive Committee in the exercise of its powers under the new constitution, which accentuated the growing friction with the denominational leaders."

Staff increases, especially departmental, meant that "growing expenses, despite the large number of personal and special gifts, kept the financial question acute. Expenses reported at Chicago in 1914 totaled \$148,449, with a deficit of \$13,105 unprovided for. The Association found itself in need of an appeal to its field constituency through a general financial campaign; and here it was forced to reckon with its denominational critics.³⁷ Because they were denied an official vote on its executive councils, some of their representatives proceeded to block the plans for campaign organization. The situation was growing acute.

"Educational leadership began to be taken by Prof. Walter S. Athearn (still known to many leaders as their dean at Boston University's School of Religious Education and Social Work) with his report at Chicago in 1914, attacking the existing 'First Standard Teacher Training Course.' As the new chairman of the Committee on Education he continued to develop the educational policies of the Association, and at Buffalo (1918) presented these in broad and detailed form and secured the hearty acceptance by the Convention (now quadrennial). This practical change of the Association from a conservative to a progressive educational body removed one large basis of denominational criticism; while its steady magnifying of its call to lead the community educational forces, leaving the local school field to the denominational agencies, had sensibly reduced the friction of a few years before. It was now possible to consider plans for unification. The example set by the reorganization of the Lesson Committee in 1912 showed how this might be done.

"So it was in June, 1920, at Buffalo, after two years of hard work by an able joint committee, the International Executive Commit-

tee admitted to its roll denominational members in full balance of its members elected territorially; while the Sunday School Council, not to be outdone, admitted all the International and state and provincial employed workers to sit with the denominational workers in advisory counsel on plans, standards, and methods of local work. With the carrying down to the state organizations of the same principles of unified counsels guiding a unified field program, the era of the New Cooperation will have begun."

Thus it seemed to an experienced leader in 1922. His appraisal is amply supported by the minutes both of the "Council" and of the "Association."

Part of the problem was what seemed to many the competitive, over-organized state of the movement. As H. H. Meyer put it in his 1913 report to the "Council," there were "four major organizations interested and engaged in the Sunday school enterprise in its larger interdenominational aspects: The American Sunday School Union, The International Sunday School Association, The Religious Education Association, and The Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations."³⁸

As Dr. Meyer saw it, "the seriousness of the Sunday school task with which every denomination is confronted, and responsibility for which rests upon the denominational leaders, will make it quite impossible for the denominations permanently to cooperate with each other in interdenominational work through the channels offered by an outside, independent organization, in the inner councils of which the responsible denominational Sunday school executives, as such, have no voice."³⁹ Again, "the denominations, as such, cannot conduct their cooperative educational and extension propaganda except through channels over which they have immediate control. There will always be a broad field of usefulness even to independent organizations, but ultimately, though perhaps gradually, every important department of work, on both the educational and administrative sides, must be taken over by some organization officially constituted by and for the co-operating denominations themselves."⁴⁰

Though in 1914 no evidence of real cooperation on the part of the American Sunday School Union ⁴¹ was seen by the "Council," its Committee on Reference and Counsel reported real progress with the "Association," and suggested "the advisability of requesting the International Sunday School Association as soon as practicable to transfer to the denominations cooperating in the Sunday School Council the

whole matter of the making of lesson courses for the Sunday schools."⁴² This suggestion was the result of a significant report made by the Association's Committee on Teacher Training at a conference in Philadelphia in April, 1914: "In the early days of the teacher-training movement, when the denominations had neither the resources nor the machinery available for this purpose, the work was taken up by the International Sunday School Association. From the beginning it was clearly recognized that ultimately the responsibility of training teachers must rest with the various denominations."⁴³

Interdenominational vs. Undenominational

In 1917 the new "Council" secretary, George T. Webb, reporting on the significance of that body, called the Sunday School Council "the finest expression of interdenominationalism that can be found anywhere in the world. . . . Interdenominationalism today means nothing less than the denominations in their organic capacity working together for a common end, and does not favor that free and independent course where men, with however good intent, work together without regard to the plans and policies of our regularly constituted church work."⁴⁴ Seen from this safe distance, this problem is now in part clearly one of semantics and terminology; it took decades of experience to make clear—and then only to the initiated—the difference between "un-" and "inter-" denominational.

By 1922 the battle was all over but the shouting. The Kansas City Convention of that year (attendance 7,034) was "more than twice as large as any previous International Convention." Delegations from all but four states were there, ranging from ten to 3,245 persons. There could be no question as to the representativeness of such a gathering. The official Convention Report makes plain what was bound to happen.

The 1914 By-Laws had clearly read: "The Triennial Convention is the supreme authority in all matters pertaining to the policy of the Association."⁴⁵ Meanwhile, "The Sunday School Council (had) held its first meeting on the new basis at Indianapolis, January 18-21, 1921. . . . Previously representative of the denominational interests, (it) now was a body composed of the professional workers in the field, both territorial and denominational."⁴⁶ There was thus obvious duplication with the now similarly organized International Executive Committee, which had met June 3, 1920, at Buffalo. The two organizations, as newly constituted, had resulted from actions of the Buffalo 1918 Convention.

Their merger was now easily accomplished, and *The International Council of Religious Education*, as it soon came to be called, duly constituted. But the Preamble to its revised by-laws, as adopted in 1922, included these important words: "We recognize that in the field of religious education, the local communities and local institutions and organizations have rights of initiative and local self-government. . . . We recognize the rights of the cooperating local churches and organizations to be represented as such in the direction and control of the community movement, which has for its purposes the training of workers for the local churches or the religious instruction of the children of the churches."⁴⁷

Lest it be forgotten by the younger or uninformed leaders of our generation, the International Council clearly intended to make both state councils of religious education and constituent denominations full *members* in the new body. This provided a dual basis, on an intended parity between the two historic sets of interests. Later the criteria for membership, of either type, would come up for more careful review, properly and inevitably.

Of course it was obvious to all that this was only the beginning of an important new story. Said Dean Athearn, speaking on "The Outlook for Christian Education," "The problems of organization whose solution we are beginning here today, must be reenacted in every village, hamlet, and countryside in the days that are just ahead."⁴⁸

That this was not just a temporary, personal, erratic viewpoint was evidenced twenty-five years later by the 1947 General Administrative Report of the International Council: "We note with pleasure the rapid strengthening of the staffs and program services of state and local councils of churches and religious education. If we are to make our ecumenical ideals effective, our cooperation through world and continental units must be rooted in strong local and area avenues and programs. It is here we provide avenues for those types of cooperation and unified actions which the denominations desire and for which they have nationally provided personnel and program resources."⁴⁹

Among the needs listed by this same statement were "a series of mass meetings and demonstrations which will arouse American citizens of good purpose to the actual and potential contribution which the Sunday schools and other agencies for Christian education are making to the public welfare."⁵⁰ Mass functions and legislative gatherings had now been differentiated. In the strengthening of the national educational mechanism something of value had been at least temporarily lost.

Convention enthusiasm seemed likely to become largely a thing of the past. Could it be regained?

The International Council of Religious Education (ICRE), 1922-1950

The International Council, once organized, existed as a separate agency for 28 years, before becoming a division of the National Council of Churches in 1950. (The Home Missions Council of North America, a 1940 merger of two earlier bodies, existed separately only ten years.) The year 1910, with its consolidation of denominational Sunday school forces, had apparently been definitely related to the ecclesiastical decisions made in 1908. The 1922 merger at Kansas City followed more or less inevitably, once the battle was joined; for the absorptive power of the ecclesiastical process had begun to assert itself.

This regularizing of the Sunday school movement as part of the denominational structures was of course success, not failure. The movement was, to be sure, to a considerable extent professionalized, and largely ecclesiasticized; but this was far more than a victory for the denominations—it was in reality the establishment of an emphasis long pioneered by lay amateurs, who believed that their common Christian witness was even more significant than their particular church loyalty.

Hugh S. Magill, a layman, formerly field secretary of the National Education Association, was elected the first general secretary of the ICRE, and served it ably for more than a dozen of its first, formative years. A capable administrator, he was “thoroughly familiar with the American public school system and with the new movements that were so profoundly affecting the philosophy, content, method, and organization of general education in the first quarter of the twentieth century. He brought to the Council a wide perspective for religious education in relation to the total education of American childhood and youth.”⁵¹

Dr. Magill had brought with him a business manager from the N.E.A., and within a few years a greatly enlarged and increasing budget was in balance. “The first seven appointments made to the new staff had or were within a few months’ reach of their Ph. D. degrees, mostly in the field of religious education. . . . The new curriculum of leadership training (was) built on the excellent work that had been done through the Committee on Education and the pioneering work of Walter S. Athearn and others preceding the merger.” “The strong and controlling influence of denominational leadership in the committees at work” was of very great assistance.⁵²

As one member of that brilliant young staff now sees the situation in retrospect, "More and more the logic became clear that the International Council was and of necessity had to be an interdenominational organization in which the official ecclesiastical representatives constituted the determining body, but with the addition of territorial representatives for their contribution to the development of an interdenominational program."⁵³ To many of the territorial representatives, however—who had agreed that the new organization should be set up to provide a "fifty-fifty" basis of representation from denominations and territories—it looked as if interdenominational experience was being submerged, and that those who had originally been full partners were being relegated to second-class citizenship. The "accreditation" process, as it developed, appeared to be more insistent in its effect on state councils than on member denominations.

Here now is a powerful agency, possessed of double strength—territorial and denominational; prepared to function sturdily in one phase of the life of the Church, from parish to national and world levels. Within three decades, taking its place alongside the missions councils (home and foreign), it will testify that the task of the Church and of the churches is one task. The result of the growing appreciation of this fact is shortly to be inclusive councils—local, state, and national. Most of these subsequent (post-1922) developments in religious education will be considered later, after we bring the discussion of ecclesiastical cooperation abreast of this Sunday school mile-post. Meanwhile this chapter may well emphasize three phases of the Sunday school history only hinted at previously.

1. Urbanization

Unfortunately the International Sunday School Association, based as it was on state bodies, maintained very little record of Sunday school work in the cities. But in February 1912 Fred A. Wells, chairman of the executive committee, had received from various sections of the nation a partial report⁵⁴ as to the extent of city-wide Sunday school organization in 39 cities of 100,000 or more in 1910. Twenty of these were organized; twelve were thought to be unorganized, but at least one of these was active in the county organization; information as to the others was inadequate. (Budget figures for church federations in fifteen of these cities are still available; almost all of them now have inclusive councils of churches.)

At the 1914 convention fourteen cities were represented by general secretaries of Sunday School Associations, exactly the same as the number of church federation secretaries in 1915. By 1918 there were 25 cities with Sunday School Association executives, in a dozen states; Ohio led, with seven. (By 1918 the number of city church federations with executives had increased to 31.)

2. Shifting Basis of Financial Support

Secondly, a massive piece of evidence as to the change in the relative proprietorship of the states and of the denominations can be quickly sketched in terms of dollars and cents. At the 1890 Convention receipts for the triennium were reported as \$14,755.81; expenses, \$14,602.78. Of \$19,536 pledged for the next three years, \$16,470 was promised by the constituent state associations. (This was before a general secretary was employed.) Unfortunately acutely "hard times" followed throughout the nation; and a serious shrinkage in actual as against expected income, with consequent indebtedness. Expenses for the triennium, 1890-1893, amounted to nearly \$18,000.⁵⁵

Between 1903 and 1918 field support more than doubled. By 1918 the International was receiving \$15,000 a year from the field, with five of the 51 state associations each contributing from one to five thousand dollars. Measured in terms of geography and finance, the undenominational Sunday School Movement seems to have reached its peak of nation-wide support in 1918.

The inevitable decline in state and local financial support of the national work during the depression was never matched by corresponding recovery. At the lowest, in 1932, state support of the International Council, then ten years old—not including the gifts of city and county organizations—dropped to only \$1,120.54. (That same year denominational support, while at a temporary low ebb, amounted to \$24,011.18.)

During the last four years of its existence the International Council received only an average annual total of \$3,539.68 from the State Councils of Religious Education, plus \$2,575.02 from city and county organizations. In 1950 state contributions ranged from \$25 to \$635, and averaged \$181.77 for each of 35 states contributing. Not only was the number of dollars reduced; as compared with 1918, the number of contributing councils in 1950 was down a full 30 percent.

After a momentary increase, total state, city, and county contributions to religious education shrank rapidly when the National

Council was organized in 1950. (Since 1954 all receipts from state and local councils have been credited to the Office for Councils of Churches.) Meanwhile annual denominational contributions for national interdenominational religious educational work rose sharply from a pre-depression total of approximately \$27,000 to \$30,000 in 1930, dropping back in the next years almost to \$24,000, then climbing steadily to more than \$90,000 in 1950. (In 1950 the work of the International Council became merged with the tremendously inclusive tasks of the National Council's Division of Christian Education, which now handles literally millions of dollars annually, including a variety of enterprises in the field of higher education.) What the state Sunday school associations had pioneered has prospered mightily under the support of the denominations.

A century ago the denominations may have looked askance at the Sunday school. By 1950 they had adopted it, and all that went with it, as a major phase of church life, and had come to consider religious education as a proper charge on all denominational budgets.

3. Professional Personnel

Not until 1892 did the question of organizing paid Sunday School Association workers into a professional group arise. An editorial in the *Missouri S. S. EVANGEL* for August of that year advocated a conference of field workers.⁵⁶ The plan was approved by the International Executive Committee, and preliminary organization effected at Chautauqua that same month.

In 1893 at St. Louis the program of the first Conference of Field Workers was carried out as planned.⁵⁷ In addition to the paid superintendents employed by the Sunday school associations of 19 states and four Canadian provinces, there were from two to seven assistants in each of eight of these associations. The total of paid workers at the state and provincial level was 54, only 37 of whom were full-time.⁵⁸

Three years later at Boston, in 1896, an International Field Worker's Conference, "auxiliary to the International Sunday School Convention," was held.⁵⁹ "The membership shall consist of international, state, territorial, and provincial field workers and officers, paid and volunteer, and all other Sunday school workers endorsed by state, territorial, or provincial associations." Thus by more than four decades was the Association of Council Secretaries anticipated in one major program field. (The inclusiveness of the membership left ample room, of course, for later jurisdictional uncertainties.)

In 1899 the name "International Field Workers' Association" was changed to "The Field Workers' Department of the International Sunday School Convention."⁶⁰ The tenth annual conference of this Department, held in Denver in 1902, reported 57 full-time and 29 part-time paid workers.⁶¹ In accordance with the basis of organization adopted in 1896,⁶² the executive committee of the Department was "authorized to provide for such annual conferences as may be practicable in each year when the International Convention is not held, said conference to be arranged with a view to distributing most widely the benefits of this Department"; and "to spend not more than \$100 in any one year for the travelling expenses in arranging for conferences." The International Executive Committee was respectfully asked for an appropriation of \$300 a year to supplement the Department's revenue. One of its published papers, "Meeting Difficulties in a New Country," by Rev. John Orchard of North Dakota, reported that "workers of almost every denomination are with us heart and soul, each seeking by every possible means to reach the most people for the most good. Nevertheless, personal and denominational jealousy . . . are not . . . unheard of." A membership of 264, in 45 states, territories, and provinces was recorded; and 50 of these were registered attendants.

Three regional conferences were approved for 1903 (Seattle, Memphis, and Portland, Me.); and three for 1904 (Minneapolis, Indianapolis, and Philadelphia). Whether held or not, here was an obvious beginning of later "pow-wows" and other regional gatherings. By 1905, at Toronto, the "Field Workers' Association," in listing its officers, included ten district vice presidents.

By 1912—not a convention year—a conference of general secretaries was held in New Orleans, under the auspices of the Field Workers' Department. Twenty-eight were present, along with eighteen other state and county workers. They spent eight days together, including suggested periods of rest. One topic, which will recur in a later chapter, was "Making the Most of the Men and Religion Forward Movement."

In 1914, at Chicago, 153 full or part-time workers (not including office secretaries and stenographers) were reported to be present.⁶³ In 1916 this professional group appears to have become more formally organized as "The Employed Officers' Association."⁶⁴

At Buffalo in 1918 the general secretary of the International recognized "the 'E.O.A.' (as) a family group, consisting only of those who are giving their time to the organized Sunday school work, under salary . . . Many a State and Provincial officer has been saved from

making a mistake by hearing some other officer tell how he fell into it. No meetings connected with our work are so 'full of ginger' as are those of the E.O.A. It is a royal fellowship, and promises much for the welfare of the work. The sparks fly sometimes when the discussions get warm, but there is always the undercurrent of choice brotherliness. Our International Association can never measure the extent of its obligation to the E.O.A."⁶⁵ So much the more surprising is it that this professional fellowship, fourteen years a-borning, was so soon to be allowed to lapse.

From 1896 to 1918 the number of paid workers reported by the state associations had increased rapidly:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Paid Workers</i>	<i>Part-time Workers included in the Totals</i>
1896	54	17 (in 1893)
1899	62	?
1902	86	29
1905	136	53
1908	155	52
1911	174	41
1914	288	122
1918	336	179

Athearn appears to have been fully justified in declaring⁶⁶ that by 1917 there were 300 paid workers; and in the 1922 report⁶⁷ Marion Lawrence spoke of "approximately 300" persons "in the various State and Provincial offices, and cities and counties where they have paid workers devoting their full time, under salary, to organized Sunday school work." But in 1923 Brown claimed only 275 such workers in the United States and Canada.⁶⁸

Meanwhile the number of denominational state and national religious education personnel had more than doubled in a decade, increasing from 241 in 1910 to 498 in 1920.⁶⁹ While the Association staff appeared to have reached its peak in 1918, the denominations were just beginning to become alert to their staff responsibility by the time of the Kansas City merger. Denominational personnel now moved to the fore, to dominate the leadership of the new International Council. Impressive as was the development of the Sunday School Association field forces, they were quickly outnumbered by those denominationally employed, once the established Protestant bodies began to take the Sunday school as part of their normal field program responsibility.

Larger Cooperation Ahead

The story of this whole educational aspect of the American ecumenical heritage is now interrupted while the parallel church federation developments are rehearsed. There seems to have been a strange lapse of a dozen years (1922-1934) in the national organization of state and local Sunday school personnel, prefaced by an apparent absence of records of their separate professional association after 1918. In later chapters their resurgent self-consciousness as a group will prove to be a strong stimulus toward the integration of all paid interdenominational staff persons in the nation into a single body, and indirectly therefore toward the establishment of the National Council of Churches in 1950.

To the thorough student of the history of religious education in America this chapter too may appear to be only a dilettante sketch of matters worthy of a volume from the pens of some far more competent educator and some much abler historian. If so, let the reader be patient. As the story proceeds, this writer becomes not merely a compiler and interpreter of documents; as six twentieth-century decades unfold, they will prove to be those of his late adolescence, young manhood, pastoral experience, and denominational and ecumenical apprenticeship. He himself has been a participant in, as well as an observer of, many of the events presented in the rest of this volume.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter II

- ¹ The *Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, p. 1,230, calls this school the first in the present United States. According to E. Morris Fergusson, *Historic Chapters in Christian Education*, Revell, 1935, in December 1790 Philadelphia organized "The First Day or Sunday School Society" (p. 14). Fergusson gives 1785 as the date for the first Virginia Sunday school.
- ² *Henry Clay Trumbull, 1888 Yale Lectures*, quoted in the 1905 International Convention Report, p. 44.
- ³ Arlo Ayres Brown, *A History of Religious Education*, Abingdon, 1923, p. 50.
- ⁴ E. Morris Fergusson, "Ten Lessons for Association Workers," 1922 (mimeographed). Cf. also his *Historic Chapters in Christian Education*, Revell, 1935.
- ⁵ *1872 Convention Report*, p. 15.
- ⁶ Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 170. For the "Illinois Band" see *1905 Convention Report*, p. 31.
- ⁷ *1872 Convention Report*, p. 11; *1869 Convention Report*, p. 15.
- ⁸ *1905 Convention Report*, p. 153.
When the Boston and Albany Railroad was built in the 1830's, "The officials celebrated the amazing fact that the two cities were now only fifteen hours apart by holding a banquet in the United States Hotel in Boston. The bread served at this dinner was made from the wheat which had been growing in Albany only two days before, and it was shipped in a barrel which had been a living tree the previous day. The world was beginning to shrink." (*Boston Ways*, George F. Weston, Jr., Beacon Press, 1958, p. 20.)
- ⁹ Historical Introduction to the *1872 Convention Report*, by H. Clay Trumbull, pp. 9-23.
- ¹⁰ *1872 Convention Report*, p. 18.
- ¹¹ *1869 Convention Report*, p. 153.
- ¹² Weisberger, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
- ¹³ *1872 Convention Report*, pp. 21-23.
- ¹⁴ Cf. Erna Hardt, "Christian Education in New Jersey," 1951, N.Y.U. Ph. D. dissertation, School of Education. Unpublished MSS.
- ¹⁵ *1902 Convention Report*, p. xxx.
- ¹⁶ *1905 Convention Report*, p. 135.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 119.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 387.
- ¹⁹ Reported at length, *ibid.*, pp. 486 ff.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 561.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 502.
- ²² *Ibid.*, p. 164.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, p. 421.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 418 ff.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 403.
- ²⁶ *1908 Convention Report*, pp. 16, 55.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 333.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 512, 536.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 118, 139.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 141, 142.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xiv ff., 160.
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 638 ff.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 642.
- ³⁴ Brown, *op. cit.*, pp. 183 ff.
- ³⁵ Pp. 13, 14.

- 36 Drs. David G. Downey and Edgar Blake, in charge of the new Methodist Board of Sunday Schools, organized a month before the 1908 Louisville International Convention.
- 37 *Fifth Annual Report*, SSCED, 1915, p. 41.
- 38 *Third Annual Report*, SSCED, 1913, p. 29.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- 40 *Ibid.*, p. 31.
- 41 As Prof. Hudson points out, there was early a "distinction between the activities associated with the ASSU (which is still in existence) and those associated with the Sunday School Conventions. The first was to establish and promote Sunday schools. . . . The Sunday school Conventions were quite different. They were gatherings of Sunday school workers, and the movement had a mass base. . . . City and state Sunday school conventions with the continuing organizations they fostered were the organizational nuclei for many of the later councils of Churches" (letter previously cited). This last point has often been overlooked by "church federation" leaders; sometimes it has even been unknown to them.
- 42 *Fourth Annual Report*, SSCED, 1914.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 99.
- 44 *Seventh Annual Report*, SSCED, 1917, pp. 22 ff.
- 45 *1922 Convention Report*, p. 62.
- 46 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- 47 *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- 49 *1947 ICRE Year Book*, p. 37.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- 51 Bower and Hayward, *Protestantism Faces Its Educational Task Together*, Appleton, Wis., 1949, p. 18, (C. C. Nelson Pub. Co.) Used by permission.
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 263.
- 53 Personal Letter of Dr. Paul H. Vieth, April 29, 1959.
- 54 *1902 Convention Report*, p. 57.
- 55 *1893 Convention Report*, pp. 144, 164.
- 56 *Ibid.*, see *Historical Note*, p. 66.
- 57 *Ibid.*, pp. 19 ff.
- 58 *Ibid.*, see list on p. 158.
- 59 *1896 Convention Report*, p. 367.
- 60 *1899 Convention Report*, p. 327.
- 61 *1902 Convention Report* devotes 57 pp. (361-417) to this "fourth regular meeting."
- 62 *1896 Convention Report*, p. 367.
- 63 *1914 Convention Report*, p. 111.
- 64 *Half a Century of Growth and Service*, p. 9.
- 65 *1918 Convention Report*, p. 85.
- 66 *Religious Education and American Democracy*, Pilgrim Press, 1917, p. 195.
- 67 *1922 Convention Report*, p. 93.
- 68 *Op. cit.*, p. 171.
- 69 *Tenth Annual Report*, SSCED, 1920, pp. 17, 18.

Federative Progress, 1900-1908

While Chapter II brought the Sunday school story in America down to 1922 and to the organization of the International Council of Religious Education, Chapter I covered only nineteenth-century aspects of American federative beginnings. During the first decade of the new century the urge for cooperation in the entire life of the churches gained rapid and cumulative embodiment. This third chapter deals with twentieth century interdenominationalism before 1908.

National Leadership Emerges

A 1900 conference in New York looked toward a *National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers*. In 1901, in spite of "strong opposition on the part of a few" New Yorkers,¹ this national federation was organized at Philadelphia; but largely through representatives of local churches or a variety of state and local bodies, not delegates with national denominational credentials. Those attending represented Evangelical Alliance branches in Pennsylvania, Boston, and Philadelphia; the Connecticut Bible Society; the Maine Interdenominational Commission; and local federations in cities in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York, and Ohio. As yet organizational policies were still experimental, and membership requirements relatively generous and a bit vague. However, as Dr. Macfarland was to write in 1948, "during the period beginning with (the 1902 meeting of the National Federation) we have seen . . . the movement for federation being developed from the bottom up as well as from the top down."² Under the auspices of the National Federation of Churches (1900-1905), "local federations were actively promoted."³

Church Women Pioneer

The nineteenth century, according to Mrs. Fred S. Bennett, was not only the period when lay activity emerged; because of the new status of women—especially organized women—in church life as well as other aspects of our American culture, it was "destined to be known as the Women's Century."⁴ In the early twentieth century three national phases of church women's work were organized.

(1) In 1901 the Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions was organized by interested women.

(2) In 1903 the Women's Interdenominational Committee on Home Mission Study was organized. (These two bodies were later

united, and by 1938 had merged into the Missionary Education Movement, which had stemmed from the Young People's Missionary Movement, organized in 1902. By 1906 there was also a Laymen's Missionary Movement.) In 1906 representatives of five women's Home Mission Boards met in New York to consider the establishment of regional interdenominational home missions conferences for women, and in 1908 the Council of Women for Home Missions was organized.⁵

(3) A wide variety of local federations of church women sprang up during these years. For example, as early as 1907 the Woman's Auxiliary of the Federation of Churches of Providence, R.I., had a printed constitution.

States Organize Church Federations

Maine already had its Interdenominational Commission; New York State organized a Federation of Churches and Christian Workers, at Syracuse, November 13, 14, 1900; Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Ohio followed in 1901; New Hampshire created its Commission in 1903. Some of these beginnings proved abortive, but the movement had begun to seed itself at the grass roots. Socially minded Christian leaders everywhere found themselves "wrestling with the practical tasks of the churches, in what was becoming a hostile or increasingly unaccommodating social order."⁶ Wisconsin in 1902 changed its "Federation of Reforms" to a Federation of Churches.⁷ In 1902 Michigan and Illinois were organized. "This seed sowing, however, both in Michigan and Illinois, did not root into permanent life, not from lack of interest but simply from lack of executive secretarial care. Voluntary service was inadequate to meet the requirements of plans that called for constant and wise adjustment of forces."⁸

In November 1904, the year in which *The Shame of the Cities*, by Lincoln Steffens, appeared, Dr. E. T. Root began to give part time to looking after the interests of the general work in New England. Maine's Interdenominational Commission had now acquired extended experience and was looking forward to making its work more effective than ever; and, said Dr. Sanford, "similar federation committees, appointed by fraternal action of denominational bodies in Michigan, South Dakota, and other states, are doing a work most important and far-reaching in its influence."

New Local Federations

In discussing the "Development of State and Local Federations Prior to 1900," Dr. Sanford⁹ also cited federations in Oswego, N.Y., and Hartford, Conn. (1900), and reported that the Connecticut Bible

Society was pressing toward a Connecticut federation of churches. In his report for 1900¹⁰ he added that Chicago had organized a Federation of Religious Workers; and that "local federations have been formed in Syracuse, Schenectady, Jersey City, Portland, and Auburn, Me." Later¹¹ he mentioned Rochester, Troy, Amsterdam, Albany, Utica; Detroit, Toledo; and Ohio, with unanimous adoption of its constitution by representatives of fourteen denominations on December 3, 1901.¹² He quoted Theodore Roosevelt as saying, "There are plenty of targets we need to hit without firing into each other."¹³

Confident Expectations

Dr. Sanford then regarded "the growth of cooperative effort and counsel (as) not only convincing but successful. The conviction deepens that with wise executive care and leadership success will follow federated efforts, both state and local. Without this service little can be accomplished."

These are obviously, though guarded, the words of a man of sanguine temperament, an optimist and a promoter. It was easy to dream, easy also to exaggerate the solidity, stability, and genuineness of progress already made. The denominational leaders were proceeding by faith. To most of them interdenominational achievement was an extra, all "velvet," so to speak. Failure would be disappointing but not fatal. Traditional church business would proceed pretty much as usual at the old stand. To the slowly expanding group of interdenominational specialists, however, now beginning to constitute the tiny nucleus of a new type of functional ministry, whether lay or clerical, bread-and-butter aspects of the problem were soon to become, at best, a matter of serious interest; at worst, life or death concerns.

Denominational Representativeness Established in 1905

It was now clear that the proposed 1905 conference should be made up "wholly of delegates from national church bodies," as contrasted with the relatively "nondescript" National Federation, however commanding its personnel.¹⁴

At a Washington, D.C., conference in February 1902, at Dr. Sanford's suggestion Dr. William Hayes Ward wrote a resolution that was unanimously adopted providing for the procedures leading up to 1905 and 1908.¹⁵ A Committee on Correspondence was appointed, made up of eleven members, representing five denominations, to which were added Dr. Sanford and, as chairman, Dr. William H. Roberts.¹⁶ Dr. Frank Mason North, in a significant article in *The Methodist Review* (Sept.-Oct. 1905) looked forward to the 1905 Interchurch Con-

ference on Federation as "among those which rise to a universal significance."

In *Carnegie Hall*, from November 15 to 21, 1905, "the most officially representative gathering of the Protestant forces (in America) up to that time," as it was characterized by Dr. Charles L. Thompson in his welcoming address,¹⁷ gave distinguished consideration to many issues. There were present 436 members officially appointed by 29 evangelical denominations, along with 93 alternates and 16 honorary members. About 70 of the participants were laymen, an exceptionally impressive group, but "not a woman's name appears on the roll."¹⁸ "Two subjects were introduced which then seemed radical, if not indeed dangerous: Social Christianity Including Industry, and International Relationships." "But, alas, not a woman's voice was heard."¹⁹

In the call for this Interchurch Conference on Federation it had been "understood that its basis would not be one of credal statement or governmental form, but of cooperative work and effort; . . . also . . . that the organization shall have power only to advise the constituent bodies invited." Long consideration was given to "the relation of the national body to the state and local federations," many of which, in their first experimental stages, antedated the national beginnings. This issue, still unresolved five decades later, was and is complicated by the fact that "a few state and local federations have included" non-evangelical congregations.

The problem is of such persistent relevance that some details of what happened in 1905 may well be here recorded. Dr. Alfred Williams Anthony, of Maine, moved that the words in Article V of the Plan of Federation, "The question of representation of local councils shall be referred to the several constituent bodies, and to the first meeting of the Federal Council," be omitted.²⁰ Said he, "Seven distinct ideas have been enunciated on this platform during the progress of this Conference." He favored making "the unit of membership . . . the denomination or church bearing a distinctive name," allowing "these local organizations . . . to form their alliances as they will, but not with this body," the main concerns of which seemed to him to be "the union of the churches, the denominations, the great Christian bodies."

The motion to strike out was adopted, but Dr. William Hayes Ward won a reconsideration. Dr. Frank Mason North explained, "We shall try to secure some sort of representation in the Federal Council that shall come not directly with the appointment by authority of the

legislative bodies of the Churches, but from the representative organizations which are at work in the field." How and to what extent this could be done, it was proposed to refer to the constituent bodies for study, and to the Council itself on its organization three years later.

The President of the Rhode Island Federation thought the national organization was being formed "on a narrow basis," and believed Rhode Island did not intend to join it. "We desire to retain our power to organize our local federations as we wish." One delegate thought cumbersomeness and divisiveness would result from any attempt to provide representation for hundreds of local organizations. A Southern Methodist spoke against "a double basis of representation." A motion was made to restrict the reference to the Federal Council alone.

Dr. Ward explained the division of opinion in the Executive Committee. The Business Committee stated, "We think we can safely trust the action which will be considered later, and we do not think there is time or opportunity here for a full discussion of the matter." Dr. Ward himself believed "that the men that are in the local councils will be the interested ones who will be active and useful. . . . These local councils are as much official as we are. They represent the local churches. Those local churches are just as official as the supreme bodies."

Dr. Roberts said the action proposed in the Plan of Federation was in the nature of a compromise, but called attention to the fact that in the 1903 letter calling the Conference the statement was made, "What we propose is a federation of denominations, to be created by the denominations themselves." He personally favored restricting the movement to the denominations. The corresponding secretary of the Baptist Home Mission Society, while eager for the presence of "experienced and able men, who know the most about the workings of the local council," and sure that the power of the Federal Council would depend on their interest "rather than upon men who are outside the local council," pointed out that the proposition before the Conference was simply to defer decision until 1908. He did not feel that they could then and there "deliberately and judiciously" favor single representation.

Both amendments were lost.

There was further discussion²¹ of what was meant by "other Christian bodies," and the consequences of requiring their approval both by two-thirds of the members and by two-thirds of the bodies represented. A proposal to amend the plan to permit state federations

to organize local councils on any basis they may deem fit, "if it shall not be questioned by the Federal Council," was voted down on the grounds that nobody wished to restrict "absolute liberty of action."

Earlier, with only one dissenting vote, the words "their Lord and Savior" had been amended to read "their *Divine* Lord and Savior." When the one dissenter now proposed to amend the plan to exclude "any doctrinal basis whatever, save that implied by the broadest Christian unity," it became immediately clear that the Conference was quite unapologetically and explicitly trinitarian in its thinking. The chairman of the Business Committee said unequivocally that the plan was "strictly on a trinitarian basis." Extremes of reaction included those of Methodist editor Dr. James M. Buckley: "I here and now declare that I cannot associate in any Conference . . . as is here called for with any person who does not heartily worship the Lord Jesus;" and the more irenic statement of Baptist home missions leader, Dr. L. C. Barnes, who subscribing heartily to all that had been said "covering the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ," went on also to remark, "I have no fear that a million Presbyterians and four or five million Baptists, and five or six million Methodists, and so on, and so on, should in the least be harmed if a few thousand Unitarians and Universalists would be willing to come into an organization with such a preamble as this." He "would like to have the door left open."

Dr. Roberts pointed out the danger, in adopting any amendment to a plan representative of the hard-won unity and "absolute harmony" already achieved, that the Conference might "introduce elements of discord." The amendment was lost.

Dr. Charles L. Thompson ²² remarked that "a hundred years ago opinions were often mistaken for conscience . . ." and that "theological wars" had continued "well into the middle of the century," when "indifference took the place of hostility. Churches no longer fought each other; they only passed by on the other side. Then gradually—and it is within the last generation. . . . Churches began to feel kindly toward each other . . . Churches began to say, 'We want to keep out of each other's way.' . . . It was peace secured by distance . . . Another step in the upward path is cooperation."

Pragmatic Orthodoxy

Dr. Samuel B. Capen of the ABCFM was one of those who stressed the possible economies and increased efficiency for the same expenditure in cooperative work.²³ Bishop John H. Vincent, too, was sure²⁴ that "while the Federation will not diminish in the faintest degree

our denominational enthusiasm and effort—but rather increase both—there must grow out of this fellowship a wise economy in our work—in some cases, possibly, the diverting of funds used in unprofitable rivalry, to a wise and promising aggressive effort.” He went on to say also, “I should not be true to my profoundest conviction if I did not confess to a serious regret that any sincere worshipper of our Father in Heaven should be entirely excluded from this fellowship. It is to be hoped that in some way (not perfectly clear, I confess to my own mind), every philanthropist who through religious motive and by religious agencies seeks to promote social reform might be able to cooperate with us, whatever his doctrinal views concerning Jesus of Nazareth may be.”

In his closing address Dr. Roberts made three suggestions:

“1. We are organized in antagonism to no body of persons claiming the Christian name. . . .

“2. We are ready to cooperate as an organization with good men of all creeds and races for the moral uplifting of mankind, both at home and abroad . . .

“3. (Our) chief work . . . is to bring salvation from sin to the lost race of men through Jesus Christ, our Divine Savior and Lord.”

Aside from theology, which is rarely an issue in the newer councils, the matter of structural relationships remains a moot point, involving many difficulties not yet cleared up.

State and Local Developments, 1905-1908

Dr. Walter Laidlaw reported in 1905 on “Ten Years’ Federative Work in New York City”;²⁵ and Dr. Root on “Work in the Smaller Cities and Rural Districts.”²⁶ Dr. Root quoted the secretary of the Massachusetts Civic League as saying that “while the churches might be the strongest factor for social betterment, in most towns, because of their divisions, they are themselves the cause of faction and discord.”²⁷

Rev. J. Winthrop Hegeman, field secretary of the New York State Federation, spoke on “Work in the States.”²⁸ He said that at the organization of the New York State Federation five years earlier, nine denominations were represented, five of which sent official delegates. Unfortunately, “some local federations were soon in a state of suspended animation.” He listed as causes of their failure:

1. Lack of a proper idea of the Kingdom.
2. A Church as existing for itself.

3. The people are for the church instead of the church for the community.

4. Ignorance of conditions requiring cooperation.

5. Ignorance of the nature, purpose, and method of cooperation.

6. Lack of training to do work outside of the parish-routine.

7. Lack of social mixers to break up the denominational caste, and of social centers favorable to spiritual growth.

8. Lack of use of the lay element; lack of a program and a secretary to carry out its details. "Some federations, having nothing to do, did it, and died."

9. Peculiar characters in the ministry conditioned by their seminaries and denominational individualism. The denominational jingo, the small man in a big church, the small man in a church afraid to lose some advantage to competing churches.

"In the outworking of our Federation it was found that a federation of denominations in the state was not desirable until enough local federations had tried out the possibilities of our method and had developed a strong enough spirit to persistently carry out our basic principles. The unit of our state work is the local federation—not the denomination as yet."

Josiah Strong said:²⁹ "I rejoice that this great gathering aims at the oneness of God's people—at what might be called *federation at the top*: i.e., closer relations through the action of ecclesiastical bodies. Let me also urge *federation at the bottom*: i.e., the active cooperation of local churches. The churches of the same community, being charged with Christianization, having the same great aims, holding essentially the same great doctrines, enjoying the same opportunities, contending against the same obstacles, have much more in common than the churches hundreds or thousands of miles away, with which the only distinctive bond is a denominational name, a nonessential doctrine, a common form of government or ritual."

Bishop Daniel A. Goodsell, Methodist, pointed out³⁰ that in "new communities . . . born of the strange drawing of men westward . . . beyond the Alleghanies . . . they met others, drawn by the same drawing, yet of different speech and different Christian doctrine. . . . All had been trained, in the Old World and in the New, in controversy. Controversy, especially when it hardens into exclusion and privilege under law, embitters, segregates. By so much as conscience was in such differences were the lines drawn between the churches. By so much as one church preceded another by age and number, by so much

was a newcomer an impertinent intruder, to be chilled by indifference, turned back by contempt, rejected by controversy, or isolated by ostracism. . . . 'Ours is the faith once delivered. Yours is the religious novelty. We do not need you, and will not receive you.' Such for a long time was the spirit of American religious life." The bishop was obviously rejoicing in the change now taking place.

Now "two related bodies continued to function at the headquarters in the old Bible House in Astor Place, New York—the original National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers and the Executive Committee of the Interchurch Conference on Federation." In October 1906 the latter body agreed that "the general work of promoting federations, state and local, remains with the original national Federation." "Just as Dr. Sanford was the personal embodiment of the federal idea in national terms, so E. Tallmadge Root personalized it in those of the community and state." Some have forgotten, many have never known, that "from 1903 to 1913, Mr. Root was field secretary of the Rhode Island Federation, and from 1904 to 1930 executive secretary of the Massachusetts Federation."³¹

Evidences of state and local church cooperation are included by Dr. Sanford in his annual report for 1906, made January 1, 1907, to the Executive Committee of the Interchurch Conference on Federation.

Dr. Root reported that 16 out of 27 denominations in Rhode Island, with 93 percent of the Protestant members of the state, were cooperating in the State Federation. The *Church Messenger* had been taken over as a Federation organ, and mailed to every pastor and church clerk. Three years of experience had thus defined the Federation task: "(1) To secure comity; (2) to secure local cooperation in cities, villages, and rural townships; (3) to voice the common Christian consciousness against evil and for social betterment." A *Handbook*, issued by this Federation in January 1907, and still extant, contains its constitution as adopted in 1901, together with brief statements as to its history, work, and financial policy. These sixteen closely printed pages (less than 4" x 6" in size), plus cover, are characteristic of the celebrated Yankee thrift Dr. Root so ably exemplified, and are a far cry from the more pretentious and costly "public relations" printing of today. But these same prim pages pulse with pioneering vision, giving clear evidence of the courage it took to make even abortive beginnings in a day of high but modest expectations. Two states shared the same field secretary. "The time has now come when clerical assistance and at least one permanent parish visitor are urgently needed. It is estimated that we require \$2,000 a year, which is only

one-fourth of one percent of the total income of the Protestant churches of the state. . . . At present it is necessary to supplement the contribution of the churches by appeals to individuals." Fifty years later most councils are still under the same necessity!

In *Massachusetts* the number of denominations federated had increased to twelve. A hundred of the smallest towns, with a population of 1,000 or less, had been studied.

In *Connecticut* nine denominations had adopted a constitution, but the full Council membership quotas awaited another round of denominational meetings.

In *Vermont*, out of 174 replies, 71 had acknowledged that their towns were overchurched. Federated churches seemed at least a partial solution.³² Vermont had evidently been conditioned to cooperation and fact-finding as it fought its rearguard action while many of its most energetic citizens moved westward.³³ A "Report of the Moral and Religious Conditions of the Community" was given in an address by Professor Edward Hungerford before the Union of Evangelical Churches in Burlington, March 10, 1867.³⁴ The "Vermont Interdenominational Commission (was) organized April 6, 1889 . . . after the pattern of the Maine Committee, which by then had almost ten years of experience. Vermont became, it appears, the principal experimental field for the adjustment of local churches. The organization of state federations went forward apace; six were invited to send delegates to the New England Conference on Rural Progress March 8, 1907."³⁵

In 1886, also, Henry Fairbanks had made a report to the Vermont Congregational Conference on "The Problem of Evangelizing Vermont," "based on an examination of the religious conditions in twenty-four towns."³⁶ Daniel Dorchester, in an article in the *Methodist Review* for November, 1884, presented "chiefly a statistical statement which gives census exhibits for the various Protestant church bodies and the relative status of the Roman Catholic Church."³⁷ While some communities were better off with two or more churches,³⁸ among 28 communities studied in Vermont, 15 were over-churched, six of them seriously so. It seemed to Vermont leaders that "federation was a successful method of meeting the problem of over-churching."

Dr. Sanford reported a recent meeting of the "efficient" *New York* State Council in Syracuse. "They have the assurance that several of the secretaries in charge of church extension interests in different denominations will heartily cooperate with them in their efforts. It is recognized on all sides that there is a lamentable waste of men and

resources caused by the over-churching of some of the communities and the shifting of population in others."

New Jersey was still in the organization stage, but an executive committee of "influential ministers and laymen had been appointed."

The Evangelical Alliance of *Pennsylvania*, organized some years earlier as an auxiliary to the Alliance in the United States, had developed local alliances. Since the death of its executive, however, no action had been taken to fill his place. A meeting scheduled for early 1907 was to consider formal action to make the State Alliance a "Federation Council."

Dr. Sanford attended the November 1906 annual meeting of the Council of the *Ohio* Federation of Churches in Dayton, where the state executive board was well represented; and he was to spend a month in Ohio in the spring of 1907. The Federation was to seek to secure \$500.

Dr. Sanford was also present at the Ninth Annual Convention of Churches and Workers of *Wisconsin*, and H. A. Miner, secretary of its Federation, reported at length concerning its work.³⁹

Other reports concerned a group of *Home Mission States*:

In *South Dakota* the Federation Council of the Churches of Christ planned to create a commission "through which it is hoped that practical definite results will be secured in the matter of comity."

In *Montana* an interdenominational Federation Commission, under consideration for a year and a half, was soon to be organized.

In *Kansas* there had been "no success as yet."

Washington reported Congregational-Presbyterian comity, also "much rivalry to occupy new fields where there is any promise of growth, much friction, and considerable loss."

In *Oregon* "we have a committee to prepare a plan (under consideration by the denominations) . . .; we have not yet made much progress . . . but . . . are hopeful."

In *Wyoming* and *Colorado* denominational home missions secretaries were showing increasing care in investigating, to avoid interfering with rights already established. "There is no department of work where the churches are insisting more earnestly that the spirit of comity shall prevail than in the planting of new churches."

Various *cities* also reported. The president of the *Toledo* Federation told of their evangelistic programs and other cooperative activities.⁴⁰ The secretary of the Connecticut Bible Society recounted the

experience in *Hartford* with tent meetings.⁴¹ Rev. E. P. Ryland, a Methodist pastor in *Los Angeles*, spoke at length for that Federation.⁴²

According to a statement from the Executive Committee of the Interchurch Conference on Federation, "in nearly all our cities the assembly rooms of the YMCA are freely granted as the meeting places of the ministerial unions and the local church federation."⁴³ Incidentally, the word "federation" appears to have had an ambivalent meaning in this period, and perhaps still has: it refers to the cooperative activities of strong churches that presumably should remain separate, and also to some sort of relationship by which weak churches can unite for purposes of greater usefulness. There continues to be ambiguity at this point, with a resulting prejudice against one meaning of the word because of the other.

By September 1907 it could be confidently proclaimed, "The Federal Council of 1908 is assured."

Dr. Sanford's second annual report as secretary of the Executive Committee of the Conference, made in 1908, covering the year 1907, is similarly valuable as an evidence of the progress of federation at that time. Dr. Root⁴⁴ had met with the *Portland, Maine*, Federation in February. It was reorganized, and in November voted unanimously, at a meeting at which every member church was represented, to raise \$1,000, employ a lady as secretary, and introduce the cooperative parish plan. "This secretary is spending January, 1908, in Providence, New York, and Worcester, studying methods."

The *Vermont* Interdenominational Commission had empowered its Executive Committee to appoint a secretary to collect thorough statistics bearing on the problem of federation.

Connecticut completed its organization December 10, 1907. Its constitution was to be submitted for the consideration of the state constituent bodies before aggressive work was undertaken.

The *New York State* Federation was active against race track gambling.

"The *Wisconsin* Federation is undertaking, during the coming year, to make a thoroughly scientific study of religious conditions in every town and city in the state." (One wonders if the size of such a task was adequately grasped.)

Reports from other states (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, California, North and South Dakota) made it clear that

"(1) Church Federation offers a solution in meeting needs that are recognized on every hand;

“(2) That in order to secure these benefits plans must be worked out that will support efficient and permanent secretarial and executive work. The statement made in the report for 1906 will bear repetition. The attempt to develop and carry forward any large work . . . local, state, or national, . . . when the details are left in the hands of volunteer agents, lay or clerical, will in most cases soon end in comparative failure. . . . As soon expect a church to thrive without pastoral oversight, or the smallest business to run itself without direction, as to expect federation to work out large results by putting the best plans on paper, endorsing them in a mass meeting, and then leaving them to be wrought out by a group of overworked pastors and busy laymen, who wonder how they will find time to do the duty that lies nearest to them as the servants of those who have a first claim on their time.” Half a century later the absolute necessity of adequate, sustained financial support for professional leadership is clearer than ever; so also is the continuing value of volunteer service. In those earlier days budgets were modest. For example, the corresponding secretary of the *Trenton*, N.J., Interchurch Federation reported that they had collected a thousand dollars. This was obviously regarded as a bit of an achievement, and no doubt was.

Federal Council of Churches (FC) Organized, 1908

Now, in spite of untoward events, came great ventures of faith. In 1908, one of the most important ecumenical benchmarks in all this history, “race riots and labor conflicts marked the scene in the United States,” and international “tensions . . . were to eventuate in a world war.”⁴⁵ The first Model T Ford had not yet been produced. The significance of what the Wright Brothers had accomplished at Kitty Hawk five years earlier was still little realized—who could have thought that ecumenical secretaries would soon be shuttling back and forth *over* the seven seas? Wireless communication was still in its infancy. Sound was soon to transform the silent movies, but technicolor was very much in the offing; and television lay far in the hypothetical future. The Theodore Roosevelt Country Life Commission was being organized; the *Christian Century* was being reconstituted for the assumption of its place of undenominational leadership in religious journalism.

Truly, 1908 was an “*annus mirabilis*,” as Handy terms it;⁴⁶ fortunate were those of us who entered into our ordained ministry as seminary graduates in a year of such opportunity. In March *The Home Missions Council* (HMC) was organized, in November *The Council of Women for Home Missions* (CWHM); and in December came the

long-awaited assembly of 352 members and alternates, representing 33 Protestant denominations, gathered to organize *The Federal Council of Churches* (FC). "Again women had been ignored, or, shall we say overlooked."⁴⁷ "Twenty-eight national church bodies . . . had approved the constitution. . . . State and local federations had made some progress," the nature of which has just been set forth and will shortly be detailed still further.⁴⁸ How modest were the resources of these founding fathers, even at the national level, during this extended period of preparation when a permanent national agency of church cooperation was still "in process of formation," is shown in the financial figures reported: "During the six years of preliminary preparation the average expense had been but \$3,000 a year, and during the three years following the Interchurch Conference of 1905 the annual cost had been \$6,000."⁴⁹ Yet the Federal Council, once organized, assumed "the \$3,000 deficit of the National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers."

The sources of income for the fiscal year 1904-5 are significant. Forty-seven personal contributions, ranging from one dollar to five hundred, amounted to \$3,151; from one to eleven churches or church bodies in each of three denominations (Baptist, Congregational, and Presbyterian), in seven states, paid amounts varying from five to one hundred dollars, to a total of \$485; from three state interdenominational bodies (the Ohio and Wisconsin "Federations" and the Pennsylvania "Alliance") came, in sum, \$65; and offerings seem to have added \$460—to provide, in all, an income of \$4,161. The proportion of generous individual and local church gifts deserves note, as do the denominational and the geographical concentration, and the meagerness of the financing constituency. This seems like "Operation Shoestring," but fortunately obligations were as yet limited. Doubtless it is fair to add that no very vigorous push for widespread support had as yet been made. In any case, it was clearly not a very broad financial base on which patiently and courageously to erect so significant an ecclesiastical structure. Nobody could have been accused of starting a lucrative "racket" in such terms. The 1905 Conference had been expected to cost \$18,000. Actual expense, not including the estimated cost of printing the *Book of Proceedings* (\$2,500), amounted to only \$12,912.99, as compared with receipts of \$16,797.70. The balance of \$3,884.71 appeared more than adequate for publication and other costs. Mr. Alfred Kimball, treasurer, regarded the expenditure of only \$3,000 a year for the first six years as "a very small sum for the work accomplished."

Issues were faced, and some of them allowed to “rest for a time.” “The further formation of so-called ‘Union Churches’ was discouraged in favor of federation,” which was held to be an unsectarian principle “still consistently denominational.”⁵⁰ The major work of the (proposed four regional) district offices was to be that of organizing state and local federations, but in the “rather grandiose plans” of the Committee on Organization and Development it turned out that “the cart was placed before the horse.” Developing permanent, firmly rooted state and local federations of churches proved to be a far more serious undertaking, requiring much more thought, work, personnel, and financial resources, than was at first realized. Nevertheless, in 1908 beginnings of significant ecclesiastical cooperation were reported in sixteen states and a number of cities.

High Intention, Low Income

The report of the Committee on Organization and Development⁵¹ was presented by its chairman, Bishop E. R. Hendrix. It called for the strengthening of state and local federations already in existence and the organization and development of federations in all the states, and through their agency, the multiplication of town and city federations. (This decentralized, from-the-top-down method of organizational promotion was for long largely theoretical, but still has much to commend it in the minds of experienced council leaders.) The committee’s report also proposed to provide, as rapidly as funds would permit, for a district superintendency that would establish at least four offices in strategic centers of population representing different sections of the country. Immediately the question was raised, Is the Federal Council moving too fast? Is it going beyond its mandate? But on a reassuring word from the treasurer, who had prepared a careful memo, the committee’s proposal was adopted.

The next question was one of maintenance.⁵² How could the proposed expenses be met? The treasurer, Mr. Kimball, proposed a \$30,000 annual budget, chiefly to be allocated to the denominations *pro rata*. On paper that looked good, and was unanimously favored. Unfortunately, as we shall discover, this did not assure that the money would be in the treasurer’s hands as needed.

A Committee on Cooperation in Home Missions hailed the progress made by the Federal Council with gratitude, and its report was adopted, but not without discussion, which included reference to one town of 3,000 people, with fourteen churches, as a sample home missions problem.

Local and State Progress Assessed

In introducing Rev. E. P. Ryland, president of the Los Angeles Federation, and chairman of the Committee on *Local* Federations, Bishop Hendrix said, "Brethren, this is where your whole work reaches a special culminating point, in the matter of local federations."⁵³ The local federation was defined by Dr. Ryland as not a ministerial union, nor a self-constituted committee of individuals; there were about 150 churches in the Los Angeles Federation. Its Council (the pastors of cooperating churches, together with one layman for each 300 members) met once a month; its Executive Committee once a week. Its annual expenses totaled \$1,800.

Dr. H. B. MacCauley, of Trenton, N.J., reported⁵⁴ that their federation, which had been organized at the initiative of the ministerial union, included 37 Protestant churches with 11,000 communicants. Federations in Camden, Paterson, New Brunswick, Bound Brook, Somerset Co., and Hubbardton, N.J., were also reported.

It was voted⁵⁵ that "the time has come when the churches of every community should join their forces in federated effort," and that "the Federal Council . . . should plan for the support of work that will give aid in stimulating and helping the development and organization of local federation in every part of the country." To the actual implementation of these high resolves the succeeding chapters of this history are shortly devoted.

Said Dr. Root, chairman of the Committee on *State* Federations, "A state federation is a joint committee, officially representing the denominational bodies, to learn all the facts and ally all the factors, and thus to overcome our overlapping and overlooking. . . . All existing state federations make denominational representation the basis (of their membership); although some add representatives of interdenominational organizations or local cooperative councils." In practice, some interesting adjustments to denominational geography, which did not always conform to state lines, were required; and Dr. Root found that part of "the difficulty of the task arises from the inertia of our present ecclesiastical organizations." "The only serious embarrassment in the development of a state federation now arises from the side of finances. We believe that *the proper method of providing adequate income is by appropriation of its just quota by each denominational body*. This principle is slowly but surely establishing itself, in spite of admitted difficulties . . . The next best method . . . is to ask for appropriations from the funds of the stronger local churches. Both

methods must at present, probably, be supplemented by personal contributions from individuals. . . . A modest amount of endowment would stimulate progress immediately." (How contemporary this sounds more than five decades later!)

Dr. Anthony, speaking of Dr. Root's report,⁵⁶ its four "declarations" and its four recommendations, pointed out that "we do not approve of so-called union churches, independent of denominational associations, although we recognize their utility in many places." "We wish to defend the existence of the denomination, but the denomination without taint of sectarianism, which forbids united action." He also underscored the implications of a federal compact," including the suggestion "that the functions of the federation be plainly stated and described as an advisory council without ecclesiastical authority, so that each state organization of a denomination may clearly understand . . . that . . . it is surrendering no powers or responsibilities inherently its own, . . ." and the clear agreement "that the federation be regarded as not a new organization . . . but the churches (themselves) federated."

Incidentally, he pointed out the economy of operations of the Maine Commission. It had made annual levies of ten dollars per denomination, or five, or none at all. If this seems a feeble and timid beginning, it is to be judged not in terms of present budgets but in the light of what was accomplished, and also of the fact that the chief actors in the Maine ecclesiastical drama had denominational expense accounts. As if to caution against too low financial sights, Dr. Root reported that Massachusetts, on the other hand, when asked to raise \$1,000 a year, had promised to raise \$3,000; and that Rhode Island had closed out a debt of \$500. Even so, it was day of small beginnings.

Bishop A. B. Leonard asserted: "If we are to make this organization effective in localities the state federation is an absolute necessity. . . . Unless we have state federations this general Federation will amount to comparatively little."

The resolutions presented in the printed report of Dr. Root's committee were now carried by unanimous vote. Just how church co-operation in the states was to be organized and financed was by no means clear; but everybody was for it. Perhaps the Lord would provide.

Basic Denominational Loyalties

In bringing the report on "The Relation of the Federal Council to Interdenominational Organizations," Rev. Ame Vennema spoke

of such bodies (The American Bible Society, The American Tract Society, The Evangelical Alliance for the U.S., The YMCA, The YWCA, The YPSCE, and the Laymen's Missionary Movement) as "the Church of Christ in America at work." The report regarded them "as an integral part of the church." Their "cooperative work along special lines of effort" had done so "much to prepare the way for that broader work contemplated by this body" that, Vennema felt, "this Council could not have been convened except for the fact that through these organizations the churches had been working together side by side for a long time." Subsequent events and more careful study of relationships would lead to a number of questions as to the technical accuracy of some of this language; but its courtesy and gratitude remain unchallenged.

What now seems a bit amusing was distinctly less so, when Dr. James L. Barton, in reporting for the Committee on Cooperation in Foreign Missions, quite informally remarked "that the lines that divide these various denominations . . . are bird tracks in the mud in a pre-historic age; fossilized controversies for which we can make no explanation that will satisfy." This was going entirely too fast and too far. Said Bishop E. E. Hoss, M. E. Church South, "I do not believe that denominational lines are simply bird tracks in geological mud." Accordingly he objected to the proposed "elimination, as far as possible, of denominational distinctions" in the foreign field. An interesting debate ensued, for as yet there had been little or no "rethinking" on foreign missions. Bishop Earl Cranston pointed out that "as long as missions abroad are to be supported by denominational treasuries," there was involved in any such action "risk of creating friction between the workers in the field and the administrative boards at home." "We are here as a federation . . . One of our fundamental propositions, without the full recognition of which this Council could not have been organized, is the recognition of our denominational autonomy. . . . We are on dangerous ground when we attack the very foundation on which we have met."

Dr. Roberts urged the deletion of the offensive words. Dr. Robert Mackenzie spoke of "the marks of our fathers flying from the mighty storm of persecution." Dr. Barton defended the report; but it was adopted as amended: "We favor the closest possible federation of all Christian churches in foreign mission lands."

This is not a study of the Federal Council as such, but only of its importance for the organization and maintenance of state and local cooperation. In 1908 there was as yet no world-wide structure of a

comparable sort; and the determinative 1910 Edinburgh Conference was still two years off. It was "Life and Work" that was shaping up its machinery in the United States; "Faith and Order" had relatively few devotees, doubtless fewer than it deserved. Ecumenicity, as we now know it, was just acquiring visibility in the dreams of a comparatively small number of church leaders. Yet the organization of the Federal Council was to make the situation vastly easier for every local and state federation of churches.

Deeper Meanings

Though they were a long way from any adequate assumption of their responsibility, in terms of money and volunteer service, the denominations had now firmly established *the principle of representativeness*. Hereafter federations were to represent churches rather than the cooperation of individual Christians, however influential. Yet the words of the Federal Council's famous "preamble," long in the thinking of the leaders, have persisted as a symbol of the deep interest of multitudes of people in some broader concept of the Church than that provided either by the single local congregation or by the machinery of any denomination, even the greatest. The churches could not constitute The Church, but "in the providence of God, the time has come when it seems fitting more fully to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian churches of America, in Jesus Christ their Divine Lord and Savior, and to promote the spirit of fellowship, service, and cooperation among them." Such language, proposed in 1905, and adopted in 1908, furnishes a milestone from which there can be no turning back. On the contrary, more than four decades later, the vaster implications of such a declaration would reach a greatly expanded fruition in a degree of ecclesiastical integration of a federative sort in the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, quite exceptional in church history.

On the other hand, at the time, the denominational partners to this compact had small notion of the logical consequences and implicit demands their action at the national level would require of them in terms of American community life. Had they adequately sensed the world-wide implications of their proposal, all would have admitted that ecumenicity (a concept only beginning to appear on the ecclesiastical horizon) could not become real until it was everywhere local, but the accomplishment of the task to which they had set their hands would test their resolution and resources for many years to come. At the outset, local and state federations would mushroom, many of them

with very little depth of root. The criteria of permanence would have to be forged out on the anvil of experiences, or painfully learned in the school of cut-and-try.

"Soon after the turn of the century," Dr. Charles L. Thompson had "invited a few of the secretaries of the various home mission boards to a dinner, that they might get better acquainted and discuss common interests." (Down the years those words, "get better acquainted," were to prove the secret of cooperation at every level.) Out of this modest beginning was to grow the *Home Missions Council*, later to become the division of Home Missions of the National Council of Churches. Dr. Thompson, called by Handy a "Presbyterian architect of Cooperative Protestantism,"⁵⁷ was becoming convinced that in all phases of their work "cooperation must take the place of rivalry among denominations."⁵⁸ In his 1924 *Autobiography* Thompson wrote, "We had remained too long in denominational valleys. The denominations must yield to the larger view of what is best for the Kingdom of God."⁵⁹

With the organization of the Home Missions Council there would be appropriate differentiation between state councils of home missions and state federations of churches, as a prelude to a long process of organizational consolidation soon to be described. As Dr. Thompson later remembered the situation, "The denominations were not only trying to keep out of each other's way. They were . . . joining hands in a common crusade."⁶⁰ Shortly it would be painfully discovered that much boasted organizational growth was far less significant than it seemed; and workers in many a present state and local organization will read some of these early dates with an amused realization of how discontinuous was much of the development of early local church cooperation, and how long it took to perfect an ecumenical motor that, once started, would continue to run, especially if it had to "idle" over a period of considerable time under unfavorable atmospheric conditions, economically and ecclesiastically.

Appearances during this first decade of the new century were sometimes deceiving. Twenty years later, in the late 1920's, Dr. H. Paul Douglass wrote:⁶¹ "Partly as indigenous movements, but partly because of the national agencies preceding the Federal Council, long lists of (places) now began to be reported . . . where the evangelists and organizers of the new movement supposed that they had effected permanent local organizations. . . . But of all the federations named, those of Massachusetts and New York City are the only ones that

have had a continuous life under paid leadership from the time of their foundation.”

But church cooperation now had explicit denominational sanctions; to experiment locally was far less lonely business. There was now a “pattern in the mount,” and those who sought to order the life of the churches in accordance with it were less queer, more honored as pioneers of an approved sort, as builders of a new ecclesiastical ethic. To be cooperative at the state and local level had now become a recognized and approved *modus vivendi*, difficult but commendable. Nationally, Protestantism had set its face in the direction of a unified strategy.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter III

- ¹ Sanford, *Origin and History of the Federal Council*, p. 116.
- ² Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 27.
- ³ Douglass, *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, p. 42.
- ⁴ For the development of federated women's work in American Protestantism see "All That is Past Is Prologue" (compiled and edited by Mrs. Fred S. Bennett, Miss Florence G. Tyler, and Mrs. E. H. Goedeke, United Council of Church Women, 1944, 24 pp.), which traces "The Emergence of Interdenominational Organizations among Protestant Church Women"; and "Forward Together," An Historical Sketch of Interdenominational Women's Work and the United Council of Church Women, by Mabel Head, 1950, 28 pp.
- ⁵ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 26 (similar developments among women interested in foreign missions will be set forth in Chapter IV).
- ⁶ Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
- ⁷ Sanford, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 185, 186.
- ⁹ Sanford, *op. cit.*, Chapter V, pp. 103 ff. (Development of State and Local Federations Prior to 1900).
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 138, 139.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 156, 157, 165.
- ¹² Thus in 1901 there already seemed to be "a vast grassroots organizational development." Unfortunately it frequently had much less depth of earth than was essential to permanence.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- ¹⁴ Macfarland, *op. cit.*, p. 28.
- ¹⁵ Sanford, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 175.
- ¹⁷ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 23.
- ¹⁸ Macfarland, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 30.
- ²⁰ Sanford, *Church Federation*, pp. 87 ff.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- ²² Cf. Dr. Thompson's address of welcome, *ibid.*, pp. 133 ff.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 605-608.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 613.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 299-307.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 307-322.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 311.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 322-332.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 421. (According to Frank Mason North, *Methodist Review*, Sept.-Oct., 1903, Josiah Strong had used this contrast as early as his 1903 Chicago address before the Evangelical Alliance.)
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 422.
- ³¹ Macfarland, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
- ³² *First Annual Report of the Executive Board of the National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers*, 1906, p. 53. See also pp. 57-66, report by Wells.
- ³³ Gray, *op. cit.*, pp. 29, 30.
- ³⁴ Rich, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- ³⁵ Cf. 1906 Report just cited, pp. 56, 57.

- 36 Rich, *op. cit.*, p. 43; cf. Wm. DeWitt Hyde, 1892 article on "Impending Paganism in New England," based on statistics gathered by the Maine Bible Society in fifteen communities.
- 37 Cf. the Morse 1928 *Every Community Study of New Hampshire*, and the Sanderson 1948 follow-up.
- 38 Rich, *op. cit.*, p. 44.
- 39 1906 Report, pp. 75-79.
- 40 *Ibid.*, pp. 34, 35.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 69.
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 66-68.
- 43 Writing of the YMCA in 1905 (Sept.-Oct. *Methodist Review*), Frank Mason North said, "This mighty organization, with its sister association founded only a few years later, has been a mighty leveler of denominational prejudices." The extent to which the YMCA has "carried on much of the co-operative work among the churches" has been repeatedly assessed. In many cases the executive leadership and outstanding board members have "fathered the local council of churches." On the other hand, both experience and experiment have tended to differentiate the roles of the Association and of church cooperation as such. The writer, who was for two years a YMCA general secretary as well as Council of Churches executive, has had exceptional opportunity both to appreciate the contribution of the Christian Associations and to discover their distinctive, nonecclesiastical functions. Numerous YMCA secretaries have for longer or shorter periods served as executives of councils of churches. Sometimes this has tended to postpone the development of an adequate council; in other cases council progress has been greatly accelerated. Present participation by active and retired leaders of both the YMCA and the YWCA in council work, as staff members and as volunteers, is considerable, and deserves deep gratitude.
- 44 1907 Report, pp. 10, 11.
- 45 Macfarland, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
- 46 Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 18.
- 47 Macfarland, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 39.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 39. (Cf. FC 1908 Report, pub. in 1909, p. 19; also *Church Federation*, 1905, pp. 201, 641, 642.)
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 40.
- 51 FC 1908 Report, pp. 47 ff. and 206.
- 52 *Ibid.*, pp. 54 ff.; also pp. 214, 215.
- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 110 ff.; pp. 274 ff.
- 54 *Ibid.*, p. 132.
- 55 *Ibid.*, p. 277.
- 56 FC 1908 Report, pp. 187-205.
- 57 *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, Dec., 1955, pp. 207-228.
- 58 Quoted by Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
- 59 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 60 Charles L. Thompson, *Autobiography*, Revell, 1924, cited by Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
- 61 Douglass, *op. cit.*, (pub. in 1930), pp. 47, 48.

Shakedown Voyage, 1908-1915

Cumulative National Cooperation

While it is not easy to say just when the Protestant Reformation began, by the time Luther had posted his theses it is clear that the Reformation was well under way. Similarly, by 1908 cooperative Christianity, according to the twentieth-century pattern, was beginning clearly to emerge. By 1908 there were in America a whole cluster of national bodies representing various aspects of what was later to be known as the ecumenical movement: the International Sunday School Association, the Foreign Missions Conference (in its earlier and simpler form), the Home Missions Councils, and the Federal Council of Churches—to name only those most central to the integrating churchmanship of the period. As yet their common concerns and ultimate merger were obscured by a sense of discrete organizational autonomy, soon to be modified, but only slowly to be outmoded. Ecclesiastically, the Federal Council was doubtless the most significant of these bodies. Each of the others featured some functional specialization within the total work of the church; the Federal Council united the denominations as such in a federal approach to their entire task.

The year 1908 is the more significant because of the determinative occasions which it *antedated*. Not until 1910 was the Edinburgh Conference to be held, which was greatly to accelerate world-wide interests both in “Life and Work” and in “Faith and Order.” Not until nearly three decades later were those two streams to begin to merge into the World Council of Churches, long to be “in process of formation.” Not until 1911 was the Foreign Missions Conference to acquire more continuous administrative significance through limited but expanded processes of reference and counsel. Not until 1922 was the Sunday School Movement to involve the denominational controls recognized in the organization of the International Council of Religious Education.

But, as Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert points out, two additional facts must not be overlooked: “(a) ‘Life and Work’ really did get a tremendous impetus from the Federal Council, whereas the American program in ‘Life and Work’ was not much indebted to European experience; (b) (even) ‘Faith and Order’ as a movement was American-

born, originating in the Episcopal Convention in 1910. It is true that Edinburgh (1910) stirred up Bishop Brent as an individual, but the Edinburgh Conference itself completely avoided all issues of 'Faith and Order.'"¹

Social Trends and Church Cooperation

Behind the organization of the Federal Council, and increasingly characteristic of the motivation of the other national bodies, the social emphasis was now sharply modifying earlier evangelistic and educational procedures. In 1906 Peabody had published *Jesus Christ and the Social Question*. In 1907 Rauschenbusch's *Christianity and the Social Crisis* appeared. Then, "thinking he had said all he had to say on the social question, he went to Europe to devote himself to historical studies. On his return to America, he discovered that the social awakening of the nation had set in like an equinoctial gale."² In the midst of this new popular and ecclesiastical interest in human relations, as well as in the welfare and nurture of the individual soul, the Federal Council hoisted its banner, in the hope that many would gather round it. Many did.

"Urban" and "rural," two differentiating foci of life in the United States, now emerging, both constituted an increasing challenge to the policy-makers in all forms of organized religion. Revivalism did much to conserve agrarian values, and to exploit for good the commitments made by formerly rural people now city dwellers; but evangelism as such never faced up with population trends, except as they provided the new location of its mass audience, for it felt itself called to consider what seemed to it far more basic concerns. According to Rich, "Early efforts to restore the rural church did not arrive out of traditional departments of evangelism or missions. The 'social gospelers' were most concerned." Similarly the consequences of urbanization for church extension were even more slowly recognized by new forms of denominational and interdenominational organization.

Industrialization and urbanization, by contributing to rural decay, first called attention to the plight of the rural churches, facing constant loss of population, rather than to the equally serious problems of the rapidly expanding cities, in many sections of which local church growth was at first almost automatic. Only later—much later—was it understood that cities too could lose population, especially at their heart, as well as suffer changes in the ethnic, national, linguistic, and religious characteristics of their neighborhoods. These changes would prove fatal to churches that had unconsciously become little more than chaplaincies to "our kind of people"—the religious sanctification

of, or sanctions attached to, various forms of secular gregariousness growing out of the social heritage of their several constituencies. In the end the new significance of the urban potential, the need for denominational city strategy, and the necessity and significance of city federations of churches as the urban means of cooperation in religious work, would become evident. For the moment, the sense of need was focussed on the plight of rural America.

To the credit of the Presbyterians, it was actually twenty-five days before Theodore Roosevelt in 1908 issued his famous letter appointing the Commission on Country Life, which reported in 1909, that Warren H. Wilson began assisting country churches throughout the denomination. When, on November 1, 1910, the Presbyterian Department of the Church and Country Life became effective, other denominations began to follow suit. In 1911 the first County Farm Bureau was organized, followed in 1914 by the now taken-for-granted Extension Service. In 1915 Liberty Hyde Bailey put new spiritual sanctions under the rural life movement by his noble little volume, *The Holy Earth*.³ Yet population continued to stream cityward, and one by one the denominations, and finally the interdenominationalists, found themselves forced to deal with urbanization as a determinative factor in church life. This meant new organizational portfolios and the ultimate employment of specialized field personnel. Before this cycle was completed, urbanization, mechanization, and mass communication had so wiped out the distinction between urban and rural that the whole nation, in all its aspects—educational, economic, political, and religious—found itself much more of a piece than it had been for a long time; but it was to be predominantly an urban piece rather than a rural one.

Nation-wide Cooperative Response

It was good to have the national church bodies federally related, but all informed leaders recognized that this nation had now become too great to permit the handling of all its problems, ecclesiastical or other, at the national level. State organizations were essential; so were local federations of churches. What were to be the consequences for state and local work of the increasing cooperation of church bodies nationally? Undoubtedly during the first years of the century the promise of greater federal unity produced an atmosphere of cooperativeness in local communities throughout the nation. The succession of significant national gatherings, culminating in the organization of the Federal Council in 1908, clearly accelerated the more local urge toward

state and community federations of churches. Yet in fifteen years this thrust would have spent itself, and new beginnings and a more realistic strategy were to become necessary.

This first period of sanguine beginnings was followed by a reaction in favor of standardized practices of proven worth, on the basis of established criteria of organizational durability. This evolution, paralleled by that of many other forms of human association (e.g., the development of the social welfare and character building agencies, and various commercial, educational, and civic clubs or associations), resulted inevitably in a screening process, informal, unauthoritative, but increasingly experienced on a nation-wide basis. The significant and enduring were separated from the well-intended but transient and relatively ephemeral impulsiveness of those who had small notion of how much of an investment would be required before ever the interdenominational hope could match the actuality of denominational fact. Seen in retrospect, the free-enterprise, *laissez faire* spirit of American Protestantism, with its reaction from ecclesiastical authoritarianism in politics and religion, put a premium on spontaneity in the local federations, and only slowly systemized the national movement into some sort of recognized pattern of standardized procedures.

Initial Federal Council Field Promotion

Among the recommended resolutions, adopted in 1908, *nemine contradicente*, were these:⁴

1. "The time has come when the churches of every community should join their forces in federated effort."

3. "This Federal Council . . . should plan for the support of work that will give aid in stimulating and helping the development and organization of local federations in every part of our country."

Such sentiments won instant concurrence, but the wherewithal to make them effective was less easily secured.

One of the professed objectives of the Federal Council was "to assist in the organization of local branches . . . to promote its aims in their communities"; but implicit in these words were ambiguities that gradually made them a dead letter. Inadequately considered theory proved unworkable in practice. What was meant by "branch"? What were the Federal Council's community "aims"? Had it the resources to promote these aims? What about the aims of the local churches in the many communities and states already organized in some fashion? How were these aims to be related to those of the Federal Council?

In the school of trial and error, at least certain negative answers to such questions were to be learned rather quickly, in terms of the Federal Council's own structure, personnel, and finances. As we proceed with the story, all this will become abundantly clear. Perhaps our best first approach to the state and local facts during this period will be to take a preliminary look at a series of organizational inventories during the years 1908 to 1915.

In December 1908 a "Table of State Federations," including "the definite lines of work in which several of them are engaged," marked the supposedly permanent progress of no less than sixteen state organizations. In 1909 *North Dakota* also organized its Interdenominational Commission, and *Indiana* made federative beginnings.

In his 1910 report Dr. Sanford, aided by the district secretaries (whose offices soon had to be discontinued for lack of funds), reported concerning the situation in two dozen states. In sum, thanks to the district secretaries, "more progress has been made this year in organizing state federations than in five previous years." New local organizations included three counties in New Jersey; Harrisburg, Pa.; and Baltimore, Md. Reorganization in Chicago was planned, "so that (instead of) being simply a federation of denominational ministerial bodies, it will become a body representing the denominations officially." In 1912 the Federal Council listed twenty-one state bodies. By 1913 twenty-six different states had experimented with some form of interdenominational organization. This looked like a rather far-flung frontier of interdenominational experimentation. How about the local situations?

In 1912, in addition to these state bodies, the Federal Council listed 35 county and district federations in six states; 49 partial or tentative federations in 23 states and the District of Columbia; 27 federations now "in process of formation" in 13 states; and no less than 99 local federations in 27 states and in Honolulu—a total of 210 local federations, in addition to the many county and city Sunday school associations. In 1913 more than a score of these federations reported a paid staff; but in 1915 the number of part-or full-time executives appeared to be only a dozen, in a total of 218 federations allegedly existent.

Of 103 local federations existing in 1913, and reporting dates of their formal organization, only a dozen had been organized before 1908 (approximately one every other year, 1887 to 1907); eighteen

in 1908, 1909, or 1910 (two, seven, and nine, respectively); eighteen in 1911; thirty-three in 1912; twenty-two in 1913 or (in two cases) early 1914. Thus a marked organizational thrust in the years 1911 to 1913 resulted supposedly in at least 71 local federations.

Mushroom Growth, not Durable

Twenty-five denominations were represented in these local organizations, in addition to the thirty in the Federal Council.⁵ Detailed inspection of a tabulation of the earliest organization dates of the twenty-six *state* bodies reportedly in existence before 1915, chronologically arranged, rather than by their appearance in the 1912 or 1913 lists, and another of organization dates for the forty-one *local* federations reputedly in existence before 1915, would probably occasion considerable surprise or skepticism. In a number of instances there has been no continuity with present organizations; and there may not now be any organization with paid leadership in the state or city listed. All the recorded dates, however, are based on seemingly reliable documentation, either published reports or private records. The line between normal ups and downs, through reorganization, and entire disintegration followed by organization *de novo*, is not easy to draw. Many abortive ecumenical beginnings had to be made before the seeds of cooperative churchmanship were finally to take permanent root. In only a few cases did the earliest beginnings survive in uninterrupted organizational history.

Of the federations, state and local, reported in 1913, twenty-seven stated that they had annual budgets ranging from \$300 to \$20,000; but only seven of these as much as \$5,000. Even taking into consideration the change in dollar values, it is plain that these were the days of small interdenominational expenditures. A surprising aspect of this record is the number of local bodies or federations with sizable budgets before 1915 that have since dropped out of the picture—at least temporarily—as organizations with paid personnel. This discontinuity is one of the most baffling phases of the story, often perhaps to be accounted for by the inadequacy of the basis of organization. Wherever it could be reconstructed, this earlier local or state federation history, its failures and successes, and the reasons for them, would be instructive.

The 1913 local federation reports supply much evidence of both weakness and strength, and interesting details as to structure, program, and personnel, as well as finances. There are a number of references to proposed constitutions supplied by the Federal Council as a guide

for local use. Several revisions are extant, and reveal the administrative thinking at various stages during this period. The data, filled in on 141 of the printed questionnaires sent out by the Federal Council, and supplemented by occasional letters, are an interesting mixture of sunlight and shadow.

Repeated credit is given the Men and Religion Forward Movement (1911-1912), soon to be discussed. Occasional printed letterheads, of local as well as of state federations, provide a seeming tangibility for the movement at this time; but they were sometimes only a facade, backed by no very active corporate reality. Additional significant personnel, already beginning to be well-known, loom out of these early reports, both of volunteer and paid officers, around whom—along with many others, including some mentioned earlier—the cooperative story was slowly being woven.

A Disappointing Facade

Sometimes the facts were not up to appearances. For example, not all the many organized cities in Massachusetts were blessed with vigorous federations. Lawrence was “not doing much.” At Pittsfield “Our Federation started off too ambitiously, with a paid secretary and a budget which proved burdensome to the churches. We are now re-organized on a more modest financial basis, but expect to accomplish more.” What work had been done at Salem? “Little or none.” Springfield’s “organization is as yet incomplete and there had been no work done.” Chelsea’s federation was “not doing its full work yet, but we hope soon to have everything under way.” One small federation asked two cents a member from each of its six churches.

New Jersey reported a baker’s dozen of small local federations, but three of these were “not active,” and a fourth “organization exists in name only.” The reporter for a fifth declared, more positively, that it “must be reorganized and revitalized.” Cincinnati, Ohio, submitted its constitution and by-laws with the remark, “We are just starting.” A Pennsylvania local federation complained of “indifference—undue emphasis by pastors and their churches on their own purely local tasks.” Said Newport, R. I., “So far we have done little constructive work.” Testimonies of this sort will help to show why the closing paragraphs of this chapter will re-emphasize the sharp shrinkage, already indicated, in the national audit of the number of effective state and local federations in 1915.

The Time Not Yet Ripe?

The Federal Council convened only once in four years, but between these plenary sessions an Executive Committee met annually, and between its sessions an Administrative Committee could be assembled. The first quadrennium of the Federal Council, from 1908 to 1912, was "a period largely of experimentation," during which "much effort was given to the development of state and local federations, the nation being divided into districts in charge of district secretaries. This method, however, did not avail. The cities and towns were not prepared for federation. Many, therefore, of the federations organized were short-lived. It became apparent that the Council would need first to develop the spirit of federation before it could proceed to successful local organization." So at least it seemed to Dr. Macfarland in 1920.⁶ Or, as Shailer Mathews, president for the quadrennium, put it, "Human nature is so constituted that it is always easy to arouse enthusiasm for an idea not yet in operation. . . . Administration is always the test of ideals."⁷ Statements like these need now to be put over against a sufficient background of national ecclesiastical thinking and action to show the setting of state and local federation work during this period.

First Philosophizing

At the 1908 meeting of the Federal Council, E. P. Ryland, chairman of the Committee on Local Organizations, had thought⁸ that in cities of 100,000 or more "federation is most needed . . . and has its greatest opportunity." As if Los Angeles could be organized like Methuen, he went on to say, "All the members in all the churches in a local Federation should be members of the Federation. The idea is to bring the rank and file of our people to realize the essential oneness of the Christian church in America." One approves this last statement, and also his judgment that "Neither a ministerial union nor a 'self-constituted body of earnest individuals' is a church federation. Either of these may form a good basis on which to perfect a federation, however." Within the larger membership, he said, there should be a "federation council," "to be composed of men": "all the pastors and at least one layman from each congregation," chosen to act as a "governing body"; and a federation center already seemed important.

In 1909 progress in local and state situations was reported in some detail by Dr. Sanford and the district secretaries. That same year an address made earlier by J. H. Garrison, of the Christian Publishing Company, St. Louis, editor of *The Christian Evangelist*, to a national gathering of his own Brotherhood, was widely circulated. Speaking

on church federation, after mentioning various worldwide denominational aggregations, and the Interdenominational Commission in Maine, he said, " 'The National Federation of Churches and Christian Workers' (the precursor of the Federal Council) is different . . . in that it is 'federation at the bottom' (quoting Josiah Strong) instead of at the top; in other words, it is the federation not of denominations but of individual churches. The local churches of a given community enter into an agreement to cooperate on a certain basis for the accomplishment of certain ends in which they agree.

"The plan of making the local congregation the unit of action, rather than a denomination, makes it possible for us to co-operate with such a movement, harmonizing as it does thoroughly with our idea of the local autonomy of the churches. It is entirely within the province of any local church to enter into co-operation with other churches of the community for the furtherance of any common purpose, without asking the consent of any convention or society or organization of any kind. We can safely assume that each local church may be depended upon to act within the limit of loyalty to its faith and its mission. It is also at the option of any local federation to act independently, or ally itself with a state or national organization." (Obviously this is the viewpoint of one particular church polity.)

Among certain 1910 "definitions," the following was referred back to the Federal Council's Business Committee with power:

"An Interchurch Federation is a voluntary association of two or more churches contiguously situated in any state, county, city, or other locality and *connected with the denominations which are in the Federal Council*, and organized under a code of by-laws adopted by them as a *branch* of the Federal Council, for the purpose of working together in behalf of the social, moral, and spiritual betterment of their communities" (emphasis added).⁹

Said Dr. Macfarland a generation later:¹⁰ "This provision, if carried out, would simply raise all over again the discussions at the 1905 meeting. That is just what happened not long after. Another provision¹¹ also went into the same dubious grounds in assuming that state and local federations were to be composed of representatives confined to the constituent bodies of the Federal Council: The various state and local federations being already represented in the Federal Council, not directly but through delegates chosen by the highest national assemblies of the denominations federated, shall be expected, subject to the law of Christian liberty, to follow the rules as laid

down in the Standard By-Laws approved by the Federal Council and to be guided by its deliverances; and similarly the local federations within a state shall be expected to promote the unity of the federation movement within the state, subject to the higher law of denominational unity and fellowship as expressed in the organization of the Federal Council.” (Can anyone long connected with state and local expressions of the ecumenical spirit read such words without smiling both at the assumptions implicit in them, and the differences between the witness of logic and the witness of experience, as local, state, and national, not to say world-wide councils have sought to work out some sort of pragmatic relationships down the years?)

Pioneering the Co-operative Frontier

Repeated citations have been made from the writings of Dr. Charles S. Macfarland. Not until May 1, 1911 (the year Kettering invented the self-starter for the automobile), did he actually begin service with the Federal Council, first as Social Service Commission secretary, soon as acting executive for the entire program, and then permanent senior secretary. In his reminiscences 25 years later he admitted that “Had I realized what a task the administration of the Federal Council was to be, I do not feel sure that I should have had the courage to undertake it.”¹² (Doubtless many a state and local secretary, and pastor as well, could echo these words. For example, Walter Laidlaw after twenty years as New York executive confessed that during the first nine months of his term he had pawned his watch seven times!)

This pioneering phase of the story needs to be remembered by executives and volunteer officers of state and local councils, not only because “misery loves company,” but because it goes far to explain what many of us have been guilty of forgetting, that the same forces which meant rugged pioneering at the state and local level, were at work at the national level. It was simply not possible at the outset for the national bodies to assist the states and local units with money or personnel in any such manner or to any such extent as would have been welcomed, and might have proven to be a good investment. Moreover—particularly at the national level—the movement had to run a continuous barrage of economic, theological, political, and other criticism, with increasing threats of boycott, and even efforts to control by gifts with strings attached. In some ways these earliest days were financially the toughest, for the sheer survival of the movement was at stake; in other ways, the worst was yet to come.

The 1911 record showed progress, with local organizations processes repeated over and over again. A printed *Bulletin of Results* was now being circulated; Number Two was dated November, 1911. These were also years when *organized church women were making marked progress*. In 1911 a series of jubilee meetings in the larger cities across the country celebrated 50 years of denominational women's work for foreign missions. These meetings prepared the way for the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions, first projected in 1912, and formally organized in 1915 after three experimental years. At the outset, 19 boards were involved; when integrated with the FMC in 1933, there were 33 member boards. The Federation's object was "to promote unity, Christian fellowship, and cooperation among women's boards; to encourage and disseminate the best methods of work, and to plead unitedly for the outpouring of the Spirit of God on the Church of Christ." (It was succeeded by the Committee on Women's Work of the FMC, active from 1933 to 1941.)

By 1913 the Council of Women for Home Missions, whose membership grew eventually from nine to twenty-four Boards, was involved in larger cooperation with the Home Missions Council, and in 1918 established offices adjacent to it, at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York. (In 1940 the two merged into one body.)

Cooperative Experience a Convincing Teacher

By the end of 1911 Dr. Macfarland had reached a number of conclusions:¹³ It was "not financially possible to maintain the district offices." "The state and local federations could not be forced to make their constituencies identical with the constituency of the (Federal) Council. They must be left to determine their own constitutions and programs. The 'model constitution' now being circulated could not be imposed upon them."

"Instead of being a Council based on the state and local units we should bring the several agencies of the *denominations* into cooperation, and in such areas as (social service, international peace, race relations, and evangelism) the Council's leadership would be welcomed."

"Individuals and groups could be found who were especially interested in these objectives."

This was obviously opportunistic rationalizing of the necessary. As it then seemed, and also long after, "The state and local federations were frail organizations, without chart or compass." F. B. Meyer, after a long conference in England, had agreed that "the weakness of the

British Free Church Council was that it was based on local councils." This weakness must be avoided in America, for the American experiment was of world-wide significance.

"Above all, it was clear that the Federal Council could not develop strong federations by simply presenting to them a general co-operative ideal and handing them the model constitution which the Federal Council had approved."¹⁴

By 1912 it was clear to Dr. Macfarland that "Neither the denominational treasuries nor the denominations themselves were as yet ready to be geared up to interdenominational cooperation. That there should be an experiment by the process of trial and error was inevitable."¹⁵ (Has not every state and city executive found this to be true?)

In other words, the prime importance of official denominational representation, especially at the national level, was confirmed in experience. The functional approach was able to enlist the interest of individuals and groups, and their financial support, over and above what the denominations were prepared to underwrite. Autonomy and spontaneity had to be recognized as values at the state and local levels; and nationally regimented state and local structures proved impossible, while national counsel was eagerly sought, organizationally, and in terms of program specialization. All along the line, new habits of co-operation had to be learned, new resources for cooperative endeavor discovered.

Federal Council's Second Quadrennium, 1912-1916

At Chicago in 1912 the Federal Council's Second Quadrennial assembled 217 official representatives of 27 denominations, plus other interested persons, to a total of 400. In this connection there were two significant conferences: of the representatives of state and local federations; and of the new Commission on Interdenominational Movements that had been appointed by a Conservation Congress of the Men and Religion Forward Movement.¹⁵

"Taken as a whole . . . the second meeting of the Federal Council equalled in helpfulness the 1905 and 1908 meetings, largely perhaps because of its contrasts with the discouraging years which intervened between 1908 and 1912. . . . The general feeling . . . was that while the Council must find its way gradually through trial and error and experience, it was gaining a momentum that would be cumulative.

To have survived the difficulties from 1908 to 1912 was enough assurance for the future. The 'state of mind' was already becoming contagious."¹⁷

Under cumulative demand, articulated in three noteworthy addresses on the work of state and local federations, "The Council of 1912 appointed a *commission on state and local federations*, its chairman being one of the pioneers of interdenominational movements, Professor Alfred Williams Anthony of Maine, to give the whole question adequate consideration and to proceed in the development of the spirit and practice of the local federation according to its discretion."

The 1912 list, previously cited, was the work of this first commission, which had also "widely distributed additional literature."

To offset the loss of district staff, Dr. Macfarland himself in 1912 conferred with the executive committees of the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Federations, and attended the annual meeting of the *West Virginia* Federation; and he visited twenty cities, some of them several times. Accordingly it was out of some first-hand contacts that he reported,¹⁸ "Some of the states and communities are organized with great efficiency; others do little more than exist in name. This is largely dependent upon whether or not some strong . . . pastor or group of pastors takes the whole situation seriously. One of the most hopeful signs is the effective organization of some of the city federations with executive secretaries. . . . It would not seem wise to attempt any organic relationship with local federations, which would disturb the (Federal) Council's present sound and effective basis (denominational representation). At the same time the Federal Council is the initiator and the creator of these local federations, and it must assume some responsibility for them." That the "Commission on State and Local Federations" had been duly authorized was evidence that the Council did "assume some responsibility" for local cooperation.

New Masculine Initiative

"Meanwhile the *Men and Religion Forward Movement* had swept the country and had made many fields white unto harvest. Therefore it was the part of statesmanship to look to the Director and Executive Secretary of that movement for leadership, resulting in a (second) commission, first called the Commission on Federated Movements, with Fred B. Smith as Chairman, Rev. Roy B. Guild as Executive Secretary, and James A. Whitmore as Field Secretary, these three men having had the larger part of the direction of the Men and Religion

Movement.”¹⁹ What was there about the Men and Religion Forward Movement that had enabled the leaders of the federation movement to get their sights so much higher? Just what was this 1911-1912 lay campaign? To answer this question we must again cut back a year or more.

As Dr. Macfarland remembered the situation,²⁰ preparations for the 1912 Quadrennial of the Federal Council had found only “three fields of interdenominational cooperation . . . clearly open”: social service, peace and arbitration, and state and local federation. As we have seen, the first attack on state and local federation had been only partly successful.

“The effort to sectionalize the country in the interest of state and local federations had proved premature and impracticable, and, in view of the financial situation, it was necessary to discontinue the sectional offices . . . I felt that the best thing to do was to get in touch with the life of the Men and Religion Movement. So far as I know, the only person to realize the importance of such a course was Dr. Guild. Through his intervention, I participated in the campaigns in Williamsport, Hazleton, Mahanoy City, and Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania; Greensboro, North Carolina; Poughkeepsie, New York; and other places, serving as the director of the social service end of the program, and in some instances acting as the dean of the corps of so-called ‘experts.’ I have always been profoundly grateful to Dr. Guild, because this experience gave me new insight into many of the problems with which the new Council was to deal. Later on, to my great joy, and to the furtherance of progress, both Mr. Smith and Dr. Guild became associated with the Council. . . . Forward movements of this kind are of great value when they realize their significance, but more so when their promoters do not take themselves too seriously, to the detriment of permanent, slower-going, but more constructively organized bodies.”²¹

The Men and Religion Movement was one of those “crusades” characteristic of a period that was drawing to a close, mentioned by Weisberger in his study of revivalism.²² “Highly organized, carefully publicized, efficiently managed,”²³ as Handy termed it, it matched clerical timidity and conservatism with lay vigor and imagination, ecclesiastical inertia with pragmatic initiative, and theological hurdles with dynamic fact-finding processes. Freedom from established organizational restraints plus confident and persuasive personnel, armed with data and vision, made it possible for this movement to sweep

the nation in the brief period from Sept. 15, 1911, to May 15, 1912, with a campaign that was impetuosity itself as compared with the more ponderous processes by which the partners in the Federal Council had so far been able to implement their professed intent.

That Dr. Macfarland's contemporary judgment as to the providential character of this Movement was not a passing enthusiasm is attested by his statement many years later: "The Men and Religion Forward Movement was a vital factor in the preservation of the Federal Council."²⁴ Doubtless one of the best contributions the Movement made was the unique Smith-Guild combination, which provided "oomph" and lilt during the next years. They were a sort of Gilbert and Sullivan team, not without tensions and differences; together they tremendously advanced the cause of state and local federation. Smith viewed the wide horizon with imaginative dreams, and Guild tilled many a particular field²⁵ with devotion and skill until a permanent leader could take over.

Federal Council Restructures Its Field Approach

The Men and Religion Forward Movement had paved the way for the organization of a new committee of direction for the extension of state and local federation activity. Dr. Anthony, in a personal letter written in 1913 as chairman of the Commission on State and Local Federations, asked for criticism and advice as to a number of possible Commission undertakings, including:

"III. A Federation of Federations, or Conference of Workers in State and Local Federations. It may be desirable to hold conferences, nation-wide, annually; or conferences within denominations at denominational gatherings or apart from such gatherings. . . . I see the possible value of such conferences. I fear also the multiplication of organizations and the increase of cumbersome machinery. Whatever is done in this direction should be simple . . .

"IV. The relation of federations to the Federal Council. Plainly there should be a conference of federations in connection with the next quadrennial meeting of the Federal Council. Should representation be sought on the program of the Federal Council? Should other relations be sought? I think the question has been settled, that federations, not being of the same class as denominations, nationally organized are not eligible to direct representation in the Federal Council." (This relatively hesitant policy was nevertheless preparing the ground for more vigorous procedures in the near future.)

By 1913 "state and local federations . . . had increased to thirteen state and 130 city and county federations,"²⁶ of which "about 95 local

(federations were) actively prosecuting their work," while eight additional state bodies were also listed but could not be called active.²⁷ Likewise Dr. Macfarland remembered as significant that "the Commission on State and Local Federations proposed a conference of federations"²⁸—a proposal whose implications have never been adequately explored.

"The Commission on State and Local Federations, of which Alfred Williams Anthony was chairman, again cleared an atmosphere which was still hazy. Several federations had objected to any effort on the part of the Federal Council to exercise authority over their composition. The Commission advised against any further effort to standardize federations: 'The federation ideal, expressing a principle, does not require a set form or fixed phrases. The principle of cooperation and concert of plan and purpose may find expression in as varied forms as there are places and people. A standard form or organization may suggest an ideal; but carries with it no inherent virtue, and requires subservient imitation. In our recognition of federations and with our propagation of the federative ideals we should allow every legitimate variety.' This settled the issue, but it may be added that later on the federations largely reversed their attitude and voluntarily sought closer relations with the Council."²⁹

A dual provision for state and local extension now begins to be evident. Reporting to the Executive Committee of the Federal Council, December 3, 1913, the secretary said, "In response to a request from Mr. Fred B. Smith, representing certain interdenominational organizations and movements, the Administrative Committee has been authorized to appoint a Commission on Interdenominational Movements."³⁰ Meanwhile, the secretary reported, Dr. Anthony's Commission on State and Local Federations, "composed largely of executive officers of state and local federations, has entered seriously upon an attempt to formulate principles for the work of the local federations; to define such cooperative relationship as they may have to the Federal Council; and to provide ways by which they may through this Commission be of mutual help."

Tentative Conclusions

"This work is still in its elemental, formative, and experimental stage. In some cities and towns it has approximated or reached success. In places where it has been taken seriously and where strong pastors and laymen have gotten behind it to a sufficient extent, it has clearly shown its promise, demonstrated its possibilities, and proved its effectiveness.

"Relatively few, however, of either pastors or laymen comprehend the significance of this federated movement. In many places it is considered simply as an occasional coming together for good fellowship.

"The federations that have proved successful are in the main those that have been formed around some very definite concrete and pressing problems. . . . The laymen seem to appreciate and understand the movement, when it is brought to their attention, better than the pastors as a whole. It seems to appeal more strongly to their sense of efficiency.

"Local federation work . . . is of necessity very opportunistic . . .

"When one or two cities succeed in (determining the functions of the local federation) . . . it may be fairly predicted that the federation movement all over the country will move up not only with rapidity, but also with greater efficiency than it has had up to this time."³¹

Read half a century later, these paragraphs seem singularly up-to-date in some of their insights.

Finances and Relationships

Economic conditions throughout the nation continued to affect church program and promotion policies, inevitably. "All (Federal Council) Commissions are to secure their own support. . . . The budgets of the several Commissions . . . are subject to the supervision and control of the Executive Committee."³² This was unavoidable, but underscored the inadequacy (in 1913, at least) of denominationally contributed funds to push interdenominational organization, whatever the level; if national funds were inadequate even for national work, so much the more were they likely to be insufficient to promote state and local co-operation. In other words, there was as yet no field budget, since the district offices and secretariats had been abolished. Even the volunteer commissions had no resources save those that they themselves were able to secure.

On December 4, 1913, a Special Committee on Principles and Functions of the Federal Council reported concerning "Relation to Local Federative Agencies":

"It is held by many . . . that the Federal Council should be the initiator, creator, inspirer, and so far as possible the directing agency of (state and local federations).

"There is, however, no organic relation between the Federal Council and state and local federations, and it can assume no responsibility for the constituency of such federations or the form which they may take, or indeed any responsibility, except as they may carry out the principles and policy of the (Federal) Council."³³

The 1913 report of the Commission on State and Local Federations³⁴ seems to have been, at least in part, the statement of its chairman, Dr. Anthony. The Commission had not been able to meet until the time of the Federal Council's Executive Committee's sessions in Baltimore, in December. The Executive Committee, on hearing this report, "voted to adopt the same."³⁵ Just what was implied in this action is not clear—perhaps was not then clear. In line with information listed earlier in this chapter, Dr. Anthony reported, "We have data ready for publication concerning 20 state federations, 80 city, and 15 county (or a total of 115) besides a mass of information covering many other organizations." Dr. Anthony had obviously applied some criteria in sorting out the data; and evidently more blanks came in after his report had been completed. Many blanks provided "no data." (The original signed replies are still on file.)

This report asked, can local federations be regarded as outstations of the Federal Council (according to the original theory of "branches")? The answer was that state and local federations, which are "organically independent, . . . have with the Federal Council only the relations which spring from similarity and sympathy." Together they maintain "a cooperating fellowship."

"No uniform name need be employed for the designation of a federation." One judgment, then confidently expressed, may cause a smile now: "It certainly would appear advisable in the future to avoid the use of the name council for a state or local federation, inasmuch as that is the technical designation of the national organization." (In the years to come, the same considerations were to argue precisely in the opposite direction.)

"The membership of State and Local Federations should be kept entirely to local determination. . . . The delimitations or the extension of the membership of the state and local federations need not concern the Federal Council, since the Federal Council has neither called these Federations into existence nor is responsible for their specific agreements and functions." (Here surely is delightful ambivalence. Has the Council decided to lop off its "branches" as non-income-producing? Has it abandoned its own children? Plainly, one cannot make any figure

of speech, applied to such a situation, walk on all fours; but the time was to come when the National Council would approach this whole issue from a much more rigidly logical organizational viewpoint.)

“Not a few state and local federations, once promising and exuberant in the zeal of their beginning, have ceased activity and are dormant, if not indeed defunct. Not infrequently the failure of a federation is due to the fact that it has not represented its own constituency, or been true to its own environment.”

The Commission favored “a bulletin service and the creation of a new literature in form of circulars, pamphlets, and possibly books, describing federation state and local, what it has accomplished, and what it may become.” (Those of us who have struggled to actualize such sentiments know how much easier it is to express them than it is to implement them, in the light of the demands for adequate editorial work, and mounting costs for the simplest printing.) The Commission also favored local and regional conferences, as convenience might permit, and a Conference of Federations in connection with the next Federal Council meeting. There was to be immediate progress along all these lines, in spite of previous hindrances.

Tabulation of denominational participation in the federation movement at this time makes clear that one evidence of the success of the world and national councils is the gradual reduction in the number of denominations.

Dr. Macfarland, who was now unanimously elected as general secretary, said again in his 1914 report:³⁶ “The federations which are being formed at the present vary, as has always been the case, in their effectiveness. In states where the movement is taken seriously by the pastors, it is correspondingly effective. . . . We need one or more Field Secretaries for this work, and I would recommend that this matter be considered in connection with the proposal of a Commission on Interdenominational Movements.”

New Beginnings in 1915

World War I had begun during the summer of 1914, but the sinking of the *Lusitania* did not occur until May 7, 1915, and America did not enter the war until April 6, 1917, only nineteen months before Armistice Day. Yet this entire epoch, including the early years covered in Chapter V, was affected by the expectation of war, its prosecution, and its aftermath.

A Directory of State and Local Federations in the United States was compiled by Dr. Anthony and edited by Edward M. McConaughy; Dr. Anthony also made certain "Suggestions for State and Local Federations." Reporting for his Commission,³⁷ he called "the Massachusetts Federation the most efficient of all Federations. (It) authorizes this year a budget of \$4,000, and has voted to become incorporated, in order that it may receive bequests." In view of the inadequacy of correspondence, Dr. Anthony seconded the general secretary's recommendation that a national field agent be named. This report was received and approved.³⁸ The Administrative Committee was now "authorized at its discretion, to employ a Field Secretary in the interest of state and local federations and interdenominational movements and organizations, when conditions shall warrant such action and when the special resources necessary for the maintenance of such a Secretary shall be provided."³⁹

After significant studies in Vermont and in New York State, C. O. Gill was now engaged in the famous Ohio Survey, under the Committee on the Church and Country Life.⁴⁰ The Commission on State and Local Federation, as listed,⁴¹ contained fifteen members; and a new Commission on Federated Movements, first listed as "in process of formation," was duly appointed as an *ad interim* body by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council, which at its 1914 Richmond meeting had approved the recommendations of the general secretary that the Administrative Committee be empowered to provide such a commission. At the end of 1915 the general secretary made a careful summary of all these happenings, pointing out the well-considered nature of a step that had been three years in the making.

We may now well interrupt the story, leaving to Chapter V the employment of Dr. Guild, and the 1915 reports made by the two commissions. The Commission on Federated Movements, now to be considered, soon made the surprising report that it had received (sources not given) contributions amounting to \$13,676.00 in 1915, as against expenses of \$11,462.14, thus showing a December balance of \$2,213.86.

This sort of financial wizardry marked a new day. *A fresh start had been made.* In time the temporary spurt would spend itself, but for the moment the interest in state and local federations moved in high gear, sponsored by a whole galaxy of nation-wide forces and new dynamic personnel. Timid minimums were now out the window; the signal was full speed ahead. There was no let or hindrance in the na-

tional denominational controls in the path of any commission that could pull itself up by its own financial bootstraps. This was the genius of Federal Council economics: specialized mickles of functional interest could easily be synthesized into a considerable and impressive interdenominational muckle. If the state and local bases could grow strong, so much the better for the interdenominational senate at the top of the cooperative edifice.

With the accession of new structure, funds, and personnel, nationally there is first to be a quick deflation of the alleged strength of the federative movement among the states and cities. New criteria of evaluation, new definitions of effectiveness, will promptly debunk much of what has been hitherto asserted as law and gospel, and the whole movement will be ruthlessly pruned, looking forward to a heavier crop in the next harvest.

Forgetting the insecurities of the past, a new beginning is about to be made, equally fallible but more enduring.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter IV

- ¹ Personal letter, December 21, 1959.
- ² Rich, *op. cit.*, pp. 216, 222. Cf. also Hudson, *op. cit.*, Chapter X, "A Lonely Prophet" (Walter Rauschenbusch), pp. 226-242.
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 25, 50, 53, 57, and 87.
- ⁴ FC 1908 Report, p. 110.
- ⁵ FC 1913 Report, p. 100.
- ⁶ Macfarland, *The Progress of Church Federation*, p. 36 (pub. in 1921).
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 39.
- ⁸ FC 1908 Report, pp. 274 ff.
- ⁹ Cf. FC 1910 Report, p. 13.
- ¹⁰ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 56.
- ¹¹ FC 1910 Report, p. 14.
- ¹² Macfarland, *Across the Years*, Macmillan, 1936, pp. 86-91.
- ¹³ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, pp. 66, 67.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 68.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 70.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 79.
- ¹⁸ FC 1912 Report, p. 64.
- ¹⁹ Macfarland, *Progress of Church Federation*, p. 126.
- ²⁰ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 64.
- ²¹ Macfarland, *Across the Years*, pp. 93, 94; cf. also *Christian Unity in Practice and Prophecy*, pp. 68 ff.
- ²² Weisberger, *op. cit.*, pp. 129, 130.
- ²³ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
- ²⁴ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 64.
- ²⁵ To concrete this statement would take a book in itself. Twice Dr. Guild spent long periods in Boston, and repeatedly months on the West Coast. When this writer went to Wichita in 1920, Dr. Guild had laid careful foundations, including responsible financial underwritings, which permitted a new and inexperienced secretary to give major attention to the cooperative task itself rather than its financing. Many other executives, who began work during Dr. Guild's term of office, would likewise rise up and call him blessed.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- ²⁷ FC 1913 Report, pp. 35, 36.
- ²⁸ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 86.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.
- ³⁰ FC 1913 Report, p. 35.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 36. (Cf. also Douglass, *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, p. 225).
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 59.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-69; for adoption see p. 56.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-102.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.
- ³⁶ FC 1914 Report, p. 55; cf. also p. 168.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 162-168; cf. also p. 55.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 104.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 101, 106.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-53.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 222.

First Period of Expansion, 1915-1924

Just what was to be the Federal Council's interest in state and local cooperation? Was it essential that state and local church federations should also be constituted ecclesiastically, by appropriate representation from member units? Or could they continue to be agencies or societies affiliating individual Christians? And was the Federal Council interested primarily in church cooperation for its own sake, or was its main objective favorable social change, including community betterment and the affiliation of all local agencies for its achievement? If its interest covered both these matters, which was to have the priority? Did some leaders regard church cooperation as a more urgent necessity, rather than the purposes to be accomplished by it? If so, what was to be the outcome?

This chapter provides an answer somewhat different from what some might have anticipated, and from what some have thought to be the case. Whether the answer was correct or incorrect is not here the question. Our next query is merely, What actually happened when the Federal Council faced up to the problem of state and local church cooperation?

A Vigorous New Thrust

For state and local cooperation 1915 marked as definitely new a beginning as 1908 did for national interdenominational federation. Each of these dates, coming at the close of a long succession of preparatory events and forces, was distinct in the sequence of American ecumenical developments.

From 1915 to 1924 the Federal Council staff included Dr. Roy B. Guild, a man peculiarly adapted to field promotion, deeply devoted to the cause of church cooperation, and backed by the volunteer services of Fred B. Smith, with whom he had been so closely associated in the Men and Religion Forward Movement. By 1915 also the local and state executives were beginning their annual assembling, a habit carried on almost uninterruptedly until now.

On January 7, 1915, the Federal Council's Administrative Committee made Fred B. Smith chairman of a Special Committee on

Federated Movements "to shape up the whole proposition." Its report was accepted on March 11, and Dr. Guild's employment authorized.¹ A "First Suggestion" memorandum from this distinguished committee outlined the appointment of a new, large Commission on Federated Movements, in recognition of two services the Federal Council could render:

1. Organizing, inspiring, and standardizing local and state federations. "No community with two or more churches" should lack a federation. While "remarkable work" has been done in "several cities," the "whole country needs such a plan continuously promoted."

2. Bringing the various kindred Christian organizations into closer fraternal, cooperative relations with each other and with the Federal Council.

Atlantic City Conference, 1915

A Conference on Interchurch Activities, for "the prayerful consideration of another advance in 'Working Together' among the Christian forces of America," proposed by the Special Committee on Federated Movements April 27, was duly convened on June 3 and 4, 1915, at the St. James Protestant Episcopal Church, Atlantic City, N.J. The more than one hundred persons attending represented (a) sixteen nation-wide denominational, interdenominational, and undenominational bodies, all of which were dealing with the problems of local federation; and (b) state and local federations of churches, whose leaders had seemingly not met since the Federal Council's 1912 Quadrennial. Though there were only sixteen local organizations with paid personnel, and two of these had only part-time executives, eleven men representing seven cities and three states actually made reports of their work. Marion Lawrence spoke in favor of the proposed annual conference of the participating bodies.

The findings of this Conference favored the proposed Commission and its appointment by the Federal Council itself, after consultation with the agencies to be officially represented, to avoid any seeming pressure for premature organizational commitments. A fully representative conference, to be held within twelve months, was suggested, "to study state and local policies; to strengthen existing federations; to encourage the organization of new federations in selected places, laying emphasis not on the number of such new organizations but on thoroughness and comprehensiveness of effort in relation to existing needs; and to study the policies and programs of local federations with

special reference to (those) of the agencies represented in this Conference.”² Thus the cooperative program adopted “would take into account all the agencies involved in a voluntary and unofficial way.”

The president of the Federal Council appointed Fred B. Smith as chairman of the strong new Commission. At its first meeting, September 21, 1915, with 32 members present, Dr. Guild was elected secretary, and Mr. James A. Whitmore Field Secretary, “to assist in the formation of the Commission.” A Committee of Direction of not to exceed nine members was to be appointed by the Commission’s chairman; and at its call the annual meeting of the Commission would be held. To Raymond Robins these developments meant “the age of cooperation is really here.”³

State and Local Executives Convened

On December 8, in making his first report to the Executive Committee of the Federal Council,⁴ Dr. Guild cited a new leaflet, “Christian Conquests through Interchurch Activities,” one of a long series to be issued. The Commission report, as amended, was approved by the Executive Committee,⁵ an action, with the approval of a 1916 budget of \$15,400, that was reported to the Commission the next day, December 9. The Commission “enters upon its work with great enthusiasm,” largely because of the *First Conference of Church Federation Executives*, held at Columbus, O., December 7 to 9, 1915. Eleven men represented as many cities and at least two states; five national staff and committee members also attended. In five prolonged sessions these sixteen guests of the Commission discussed budget, comity, Bible study, boys’ work, missions, survey, delinquency, recreation, etc. Actual budgets ranged from \$800 in Dayton to \$12,000 in New York City; salaries from one (part-time) of only \$120 per year to \$3,500.

The functions of a city federation were held to include: aid to specialized agencies; the making of surveys, religious and social; direction and endorsement of rescue missions; organizing missionary propaganda; relating boys’ work to the churches; arousing and molding public opinion for welfare work; stimulating public officials. (The precise language was “to force action on the part of public authorities”!) In general, the federation was to be a clearing house rather than an operating agency. The experienced recording secretary, E. T. Root, condensed the conference report into a careful one-page summary. (Five pages of full minutes are also still extant.) This “first” conference is clearly another important bench mark in the history of American ecumenicity. Here are some of the early roots of the Association of Council Secretaries.

A year later Dr. H. K. Carroll, writing of these pioneers, said, "Each . . . was working without precedents, yet when these men came together for the first time, there was remarkable agreement between them as to principles, scope of work, and methods."⁶ In his June 1916 report, and repeatedly later, Dr. Guild hailed this new body as "establishing a new religious order in the United States," a statement in which Dr. Macfarland concurred.⁷ Fred B. Smith's prediction, "There will yet be such a gathering of a thousand men," carried on the organization letterhead, though still far from fulfilled, now seems quite possible of attainment. The need for training this new profession was recognized from the outset, and steps were taken to bring it to the attention of the theological seminaries.

Permanent organization was effected; "The Church Federation Secretaries' Council" proved to be a short-lived designation for an enduring body. Dues of one dollar per year per federation were voted. Morton C. Pearson of Indianapolis was elected chairman, and Root of Massachusetts for what became a three-year term as secretary. The order of business for a meeting in connection with the 1916 Federal Council Quadrennial was left to the officers in consultation with Dr. Guild.

In January 1916 the Commission's Committee of Direction proposed a second Atlantic City Conference of 250 delegates from co-operating agencies, to be held in June. Cooperation with the Home Missions Council in some state-wide campaigns was also authorized.⁸

In February Dr. Frank Mason North wrote to Fred B. Smith: "So far as the Commission is charged with the development of local federations, there is before it a field of opportunity that seems to me limited only by the number of communities in the United States. This phase of the program appeals to me with great force. Some of us who shared in the effort that resulted in the organization of the Federal Council had at the beginning and still have the conviction that federation in the local community, though a less splendid achievement, is particularly more immediate in its power of reducing friction and releasing forces for the promotion of the Kingdom." What this statement by the president of the Federal Council does not say is perhaps as important as what it does. For the time being the Federal Council was to give its attention to the extension of federative effort rather than to the integration of nation-wide forces. The latter would come later.

Realistic Inventory

After surveying nearly a hundred federations, Dr. Guild found that many of them were inactive. Failure in most instances was due

to dependence on voluntary service. Often the leading officer was a clergyman who moved away. "It is very evident that in cities with a population of over 100,000 not much can be accomplished without . . . an employed executive." "To insure permanence of work, it is necessary to have the burden of support fall on the shoulders of laymen." "Most of the federations have been formed to deal with some evil condition existing in the community. . . . It is a waste of time to form federations merely because that is the proper thing to do."

Dr. Guild asserted that seven federations had grown out of the Men and Religion Forward Movement, while another was reputedly the result of the Laymen's Missionary Movement, as was the United Stewardship Council. He also ventured the opinion that "the closer the central organization is to the official ecclesiastical organizations of the community, the greater is the assurance of permanency. Federation budgets now ran as high as \$18,000. "As in all religious work, the financial problem is the source of much difficulty. . . . Fifteen federations secure funds through church contributions."

On December 5 and 6, 1916, at St. Louis, the Conference on Organizations, first suggested for Atlantic City, was tardily held, with 89 persons present at five sessions.⁹ It was guided by a characteristic page of "Principles"¹⁰ concerning the cooperative relations of Christian organizations, drawn up by Dr. John R. Mott, and considered to be of sufficient importance to be published separately, as well as included in the five-page report from a distinguished committee of ten on "Suggestions."

New Momentum

Thus in two years the Commission had to a considerable extent accomplished its second purpose, to bring various Christian organizations into closer fraternal, cooperative relations with each other and to the Federal Council; and the Federal Council had won an acknowledged place of leadership, especially in integrating the Christian forces of the local community. Accordingly, Dr. North's judgment, as to the relative importance of the first or promotional function of the Commission, was seemingly sustained. (The quite unexpectedly successful fulfillment of the Commission's second function, through the organization of the exceptionally inclusive National Council of Churches, was now less than a generation away. In only 34 years there would be a massing of ecclesiastical agencies that to a few had begun to seem logically desirable, even in 1916, though then almost hopelessly remote.)

On December 5, 1916, the Council of Church Federation Secretaries had also met, with four national and eleven state and local men present. Differences of local names now seemed justified, in spite of the feeling that a "common name (was) highly desirable." While similar variety of organization was felt to be permissible, all agreed that ideally a local cooperative agency should include both pastor and layman from each church, an executive committee, and an employed executive secretary. Comity, it was declared, could best be handled by a committee composed of denominational representatives who "have the say" as to the location of new churches. (The problems of "old" churches, especially at the heart of the cities, had seemingly not yet registered.)

Badges, with the privilege of the floor, granted by the Federal Council for its quadrennial sessions, December 6-11, 1916, were gratefully accepted. The growing though meager strength of this Association is evidenced by its increase in membership from twelve in 1915 to twenty-four in 1919; at no time during this period was its cash balance at the end of the fiscal year as much as \$18.50! One answer to a question as to what makes a church a member of a federation was, "Do not insist on delegates or dues. Keep on sending literature and get all the cooperation possible. The Federation, if it is doing things, will draw them in." Was this obviously opportunistic, free-sample, interim ethic realistic and unavoidable at the time?

A resolution,¹¹ offered by Dr. Root, sought the inclusion of executive secretaries either as corresponding members of the Federal Council or as denominational representatives, in "due proportion of such men with a practical experience in the details of church federation." Thus early was this issue raised, for continuance until now. In response to the query as to how federation could be extended to smaller cities, Indiana reported that it had a desk in the Indianapolis office, and Massachusetts that its promotional materials specialized on extension. Toledo, O., North Dakota, and Gary, Ind., plans for teaching the Bible in the public schools were presented.

The printed report of the Commission for the 1916 Quadrennial of the Federal Council¹² included much detailed documentation of how it had been organized and how it had begun its work, together with a discussion of such topics as standardization of program, executive leadership, and basis of organization. Signed by Fred B. Smith as chairman, it also included Dr. Guild's June report and that of the Field Secretary. In the six months before this December meeting, Guild

and Whitmore, who "had visited practically all the larger cities west of the Mississippi, had found many communities clearly ready to revive old federations or to create new ones." Earlier in the year they had visited from one to six cities in each of eighteen states and the District of Columbia.

Consolidated Emphasis on State Federations

A Committee of Fifteen now recommended "that the Commission on Federated Movements and the Commission on State and Local Federations be united under the name Commission on Federated Movements."¹³ The Business Committee, however, on December 7, 1916,¹⁴ substituted "Commission on Interchurch Federations (State and Local)," and its recommendation was adopted rather than the language proposed by the Committee of Fifteen. Commission members were not to be chosen with reference to agency representation.

On its Business Committee's recommendation,¹⁵ the Council also directed "its newly appointed Commission on Interchurch Federations (state and local) to give special attention to the development of *state* federations, in order, in the most efficient and economical manner, to cover the whole field of interchurch work, rural as well as urban, the combination of churches as well as cooperation by the churches." Thus was begun a long campaign, of far-reaching importance, that was to continue for decades, to reach local situations from state centers, and to cover areas lacking metropolitan cities. This thrust for stronger state councils was seen to be the more necessary in the light of Dr. Anthony's analysis of cooperation in home missions, which "found great weaknesses, especially at the state level."¹⁶ (The matter of the "combination of churches" was to involve differences of opinion as to method.¹⁷)

In his 1916 statement Dr. Carroll cited the Federal Council's 1913 disavowal of responsibility for local and state federations, "except as far as they may carry out (its own) principles and policy,"¹⁸ but in the Federal Council Year Book covering 1916 he noted the purposes, plan, organization, and history of the new consolidated Commission.¹⁹ Thus duplication, transition, and consolidation had led to "more aggressive" field outreach.

Pittsburgh, 1917

On January 25, 1917, the Committee of Direction nominated 24 new members of the Commission, in addition to the 54 earlier members. Plans for a Pittsburgh Congress ²⁰ on Purpose and Methods of Inter-

church Cooperation were far enough along by this time to permit the naming of eight chairmen for subcommissions. On February 23, with only four declinations among Commission nominees reported, four other names were added. The Pittsburgh dates were set for October 1 to 4, and appointments made to the subcommissions. By April 16 (ten days after the United States had declared war), much was being written on "The War and the Churches." In spite of the war, it was voted to proceed with the Pittsburgh Congress, a statement of the need of which was now widely circulated. The subcommissions were in session from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

By June 22 wartime committees seemed essential, as did also a proposed field secretary. While more than half of the Congress fund had been raised, another \$3,000 was needed. Said Dr. Guild's semi-annual report, in words like those used earlier, and to be used repeatedly from now on: "We do not encourage the formation of a federation in a large city unless there is the prospect of establishing a central office and employing a capable secretary. The task is too great for volunteer service alone." Again an impressive list of cities had been visited by the secretary or the chairman.

The historic Pittsburgh Congress, with its effective promotional material, program format, and careful body of discussion material, was held, according to plan, during the first four days of October, 1917. It resulted in a useful volume, *Purpose and Methods of Interchurch Cooperation*, a manual of interchurch work; and was attended by 506 delegates, representing 31 denominations, three dozen states, and 134 towns and cities.

In this connection a brief informal business session of "The Council of Church Federation Executive Secretaries" was held. The organization's letterhead was now carrying the slogan: "For a Trained Ministry—Representing All the Churches in Service to the Whole Community"; it listed twenty members, including executives from Atlanta, Buffalo, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Duluth, Erie, Gary, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Los Angeles (and California), Louisville (2), Lowell, New York City, Pittsburgh, Portland Me., San Francisco, and Toledo; and Massachusetts. The help of local and state secretaries in field visitation was acknowledged.

On October 4, at the Wm. Penn Hotel, the Commission also met. On October 17 an editorial committee was appointed, for the important task of issuing the proposed *Manual*. An additional (ninth) commission report had been added on "War-Time Local Interchurch

Work," printed separately. On October 11 *The Continent* printed an extended editorial on the Congress.

Dr. Guild felt that "The success of the Congress has increased greatly the responsibilities of this Commission. There are now more than twenty employed executive secretaries. A new religious order has been established." "Plans should be made for visits to theological seminaries, that certain schools may begin the preparation of men for this work as they do for the missionary field."²¹ His recommendation "that plans now be initiated for holding next year a summer school for executive secretaries, those who are contemplating entering on this work, also ministers and laymen who as officers and workers in federations are now giving volunteer service," was favorably referred to the appropriate committee; and in December 1917 was approved by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council. On the request of the Federal Council's Executive Committee, the president of the Federal Council was asked to add the president of the Council of Executive Secretaries and Morton C. Pearson of Indianapolis to the Commission, thus relating the local and state executives to the Federal Council.

The 1917 Commission²² report began: "At the present time there are twenty-six employed executive secretaries, an increase of over 30 percent during the year. This new religious order is now well established and will increase steadily in number." The report appropriately included the purposes and recommendations of the Congress. These however were now available in the new *Manual*, orders for which had been received from all parts of the country.²³ Dr. Guild was doubtless right: "The Pittsburgh Congress marks a definite stage in the progress of Christian cooperation."²⁴

En route to and from Hawaii in November and December, 1917, Fred B. Smith visited many cities, making 89 addresses. New federations were organized in Butte, Mont., and Seattle, Wash. Likewise Dr. Guild had been in Ohio, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, and Pennsylvania. "The fruits of the Pittsburgh Congress are in evidence on every hand."

Interruptions: World War I and the Interchurch World Movement

On January 1, 1918 *The Federal Council Bulletin* began to be a valuable news medium. On February 7 a budget of \$16,600 for 1918 was adopted by the Committee of Direction. By June 18 the proposed Lake Geneva Summer School, in spite of previous approval by the Federal Council's Executive Committee, had to be postponed—so many men who had intended to enroll in it were now engaged in some kind of war service.

At a business session in connection with the Secretarial Conference on Principles and Methods of Interchurch Work, September 25, 1918, at the Sherman Hotel, Chicago, Fred L. Fagley of Cincinnati was elected president of the secretarial fellowship. This gathering was also a joint session of the Chicago Inter-Church War Work Commission, and the Federal Council's Commission on Interchurch Federations, in cooperation with the National Committee on the Churches and the Aims of the War.

At this Conference "twenty-six secretaries from all parts of the country were in continuous session for four days, interchanging and discussing experiences with a view to further understanding the aims and methods of interchurch work. The men who were doing the work conducted the discussions. Each man answered three questions: "What did you do?" "How did you do it?" "What do you plan to do this season?" With these secretaries were officers of federations, men who had been sent from cities to find out how to form a federation at home, and prospective secretaries. The Council of Church Federation Secretaries is a new but already well-established order of Christian workers. There are now over 30 employed secretaries of state and local federations."²⁵

By October 23, 1918, the *Manual* was in its third thousand. Dr. Guild had visited 32 cities in six months. In his detailed report he said, "It is no longer a question of whether or not the churches of a city will be federated—it is only a question of when." Yet, he felt sure, "undue haste" was to be avoided.

An important background factor in these days was the Interchurch World Movement, which, on December 11, 1918, exactly a month after the Armistice was signed, began its brief, ill-starred history of approximately nineteen months. The wartime psychology lingered, and the task of demobilization and of bringing the troops back from Europe took many months. On December 30, 1918, it was reported that Rochester, N.Y., was organized; that Columbus, O., had reorganized on December 16 and was seeking an executive; and that Chicago was reorganizing. It was hoped that ten new federations with employed secretaries could soon be announced. A committee was named to arrange the regional conferences suggested by the Federal Council's Executive Committee. Fred B. Smith now reported that these conferences had been merged into the Interchurch World Movement.²⁶

According to the General Secretary's 1918 report,²⁷ "The Commission on Interchurch Federations has made wonderful progress in

the development of substantial and effective local federations of churches." The Commission's report, signed by Fred B. Smith, substantiated this statement.

Relationship Problems

Early 1919 appears to have been a slack time, but twenty-five secretaries were guests of the Church Peace Union at Pittsburgh, September 15 to 18, 1919, at the Hotel Chatham, where there was a continuing "desire that there might be a closer relation between the federations and the Federal Council." At the annual meeting of the Association of Executive Secretaries on the 16th the Pittsburgh executive, Charles R. Zahniser, of "Case Work Evangelism" fame, was elected president. Thirty-four persons were present. An executive committee was created, to include the officers and three others to be named by the president. Dr. Guild then stated that more than forty cities had full-time executives. Dates of the organization of fifteen of these were recorded in the minutes.

No less than thirteen program items were discussed at this conference, and 25 pages of minutes recorded. These included: comity, women and federation, young people, international justice and good will and the League of Nations, federation and industry, publicity, evangelism, religious education, the Interchurch World Movement, civic reform, administrative problems, and the Sabbath. E. R. Wright of Cleveland reported that in their Federation they now had enlisted two laymen for every minister; and Guild advised that "Those should be on the comity committee who do the spending, the raising, and the giving of the money."

On November 25, 1919, the Committee of Direction learned that the year marked "the largest developments" ever; field contacts had included six months of the secretary's time on the Pacific Coast. By then, five states had employed executives (California, Connecticut, Indiana, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania), and "Ohio will soon have one." Twenty-five cities were listed, six of them with additional part-time personnel, and two with office secretaries. Four strong federations were looking for executives. Relations with the Interchurch World Movement, which had provided \$504.57 for the work of the Commission, were discussed. The Commission welcomed nominations to its membership from the federations. Another "Pittsburgh" in 1920 was approved, with the Committee of Direction to be supplemented by the Executive Committee of the Council of Secretaries.

On December 30, 1919, the General Committee for the Church and Community Conference met at the Union League Club, with ten persons present. Fred B. Smith presented elaborate "Suggestions." With Mr. Smith as chairman, and Dr. Guild as secretary, nine persons from the Commission and the five members of the Executive Committee of the Council of Federation Secretaries were named to the Committee on Arrangements. Wright had invited the conference to Cleveland; a Cleveland cooperating committee of 58 members had been named. The general Committee of Arrangements finally numbered 42, and the Program Committee had nine members. An eight-page memo presented: "I, Purposes; II, Program; III, Delegates." An incidental question was, "Should there be a report of the Allied Christian Organizations at Cleveland?" The stage was being set for a second significant national gathering, with adequate organizational preparation.²⁸

Cleveland, 1920, A New High

At a February 12 meeting, with three dozen persons present, at the Pennsylvania Hotel, followed by dinner at Delmonico's, the agenda for the Cleveland Conference began to take shape. It was suggested that Negroes and representatives of foreign groups be added to the personnel; and also some representative women. On May 24, 1920, in connection with an open meeting of the Cleveland Church Federation, and again on June 2, sessions of the Council of Secretaries were held. Dr. Laidlaw spoke on his work in the Census Bureau. Rev. E. R. Wright, the host, was elected president; and Orlo J. Price, executive of the Rochester, N.Y., Federation, began a three year term as secretary, to be followed for eight years by his colleague, Mrs. C. T. Simonds.

On May 26 Dr. Guild reported the reorganization of the Committee of Direction to include representatives nominated by state and local federations: "This relates the work of the Commission to the Local Federations and indirectly relates the Federations with the Federal Council," even more intimately than through membership in the Commission.

Boston was reported to have \$9,000 in the bank, and expected very shortly to name an efficient secretary. *Washington, D.C.*, had organized a strong federation and had employed a capable executive. The writer had begun as executive of the new *Wichita* organization, like many others at first called a federation, later a council. Finance campaigns had been helped in *Dayton* and *Toledo*. Progress in *Philadelphia* had been delayed by the Interchurch World Movement situ-

ation. *Six states* now had church federations—still a tiny development, in sharp contrast with the nation-wide Sunday school movement; while two county and 36 city federations had secretaries on full or part time. Employed personnel now numbered 52. Splendid cooperation between the Interchurch World Movement and the Commission was reported.

Mr. Smith said that funds had been provided to meet the expense of the Cleveland Convention, but did not indicate the source. "The secretary stated that as the result of the past five years the Federation Movement had assumed such proportions that it was no longer possible for one man to carry on the work." On May 31, 1920, Dr. Guild declared that "The organization of *state* federations is one of our next tasks. To make haste slowly is the policy of this interchurch work." (This was in deliberate contrast to the policy of the Interchurch World Movement, which was just about to fold up.)²⁹

The Cleveland Convention marked the end of an epoch. Some of us were drawn into the work on the crest of a wave. In 1930 Dr. H. Paul Douglass was to write, "Nearly one-third of the existing federations take their origins from the three years 1918-1920."³⁰ These included Boston, Detroit, Washington, and Wichita—to mention only a few. World War I had been more than an interruption: one of its cumulative by-products had been the discovery of unusual resources for community development. Dr. Douglass felt that it had "stimulated the organization of new federations in many cities," though their formal beginnings did not occur until the war was won.³¹ To him the years 1920-1924 evidenced not as much continuous advance as a slightly delayed post-war period of "slowing up." In 1920 the tide was at the flood. With the collapse of the Interchurch World Movement, could it do anything but temporarily recede?

No such misgivings were evident, however, when the Commission met on June 2, 1920. Dr. Guild had again been five months on the Coast. He now reported *forty cities* organized. He had helped cities raise over \$200,000. Confidently it was said, "There are fewer than a score of large cities without a federation or council of churches. It is . . . expected that within two years practically all these will have formed a suitable organization; . . . the Commission must now plan its work on a larger scale." The immediately succeeding years were unfortunately not to sustain these optimistic hopes.

As compared with the trifling financial resources of the AES, the huge resources of the Commission at this time looked almost inexhaustibly large. Incidentally, it was announced that Raymond Robins

and Fred B. Smith were soon to make a world tour for the World Alliance and Church Peace Union. Few of us who attended the Cleveland Convention June 1-3, 1920, had any realization that, just as some of us set our hands to the task, the peak was for the moment passing. Like the Pittsburgh Congress, this Church and Community Convention also had commanding printed matter, including impressive reports, available for all delegates in proof sheets, and subsequently embodied in the volume *Community Programs for Cooperating Churches*. *The Continent* was again impressed, as well it might be.³²

The Commission was now one on *councils* rather than federations of churches, the transition from "federation" to "council" as the more normative word having been accomplished. Its 1920 report included 42 local, two county, and six state councils. One of these last (Pennsylvania) was for the time being served by a pastor (Wm. L. Mudge) on a part-time basis.³³

By November 23 the Committee of Seven on Post-Cleveland Plan and Program was confident and expectant. Structural changes within the Federal Council, making its outreach a department rather than a commission, were suggested; and it was held that "the Commission's staff and organization, strong as they are, are not commensurate with the work to be done." Staff increase was therefore recommended; one or two additional secretaries ("men of ability and judgment") seemed imperative as soon as support could be secured. It was optimistically believed that first in larger cities, then in the states, councils "will be easily established on permanent and practical foundations," while more attention should also be given to smaller cities unable to employ executives. Because of a request for a statement covering the basis of federation organization as related to Christian forces, it was now explicitly reiterated that "the Commission . . . is seeking to develop the Cooperation of Christian forces in the various cities."

"Local Federations of Churches, through the Commission on Interchurch Federations, have multiplied and developed during the Quadrennium, so that whereas four years ago there were only twelve cities with substantial federations and employed executive secretaries, today there are more than forty with substantial federations, with executive secretaries."³⁴

At the 1920 Boston Quadrennial Dr. Joseph Vance, president of the *Detroit* Council, addressed the Federal Council on "The Church and Its Service to the Community." E. L. Shuey, layman, *Dayton* president, and Rev. L. W. McCreary, *Baltimore* Federation executive, also

spoke briefly.³⁵ In March the Commission on Councils of Churches adopted a 1921 budget of \$26,000.³⁶

The Pace Begins to Slacken

After another relatively slack period in early 1921, the AES annual meeting was held June 10, at the Spinning Wheel Restaurant in New York City, in connection with what had amounted to a "school of methods" at Union Theological Seminary, June 6 to 10, where rooms were free to the three dozen secretaries attending. Thirty-one attended the business session at which Rev. A. H. Armstrong of St. Louis was elected president; forty members paid dues in 1921. Two federations also paid ten dollars each; and nine, fifteen dollars—a total of \$155 in organizational dues.³⁷

On June 10 the Commission also met, at the Marble Collegiate Church. In presenting his report Dr. Guild said, "There is every reason to believe that by the end of 1921 practically every large city in the country will be organized." But again events were a bit slower in action than expected. The *state* field was said to be especially ripe. Women representatives of local churches were increasing. Sixteen men and women were named as the Committee of Direction for 1921-1922, and were empowered to fill any vacancy in their Committee.

On August 23, at Chautauqua, as part of Federal Council Week, Dr. Guild spoke on "Church Federation Problems" and "Community Conquest by Cooperating Churches"; Orlo J. Price of Rochester on "The Picture of Local Cooperation"; and Bishop McDowell on "The Ministry of Cooperation."³⁸

On December 16 the Executive Committee of the Federal Council, on recommendation of its Business Committee,³⁹ in adopting the Report of the Commission on Councils of Churches, declared, "It is gratifying to note the steady advance of the cooperative principle in the larger cities, and the significant achievement of the churches when acting in accord and in union, especially in the field of evangelism. We heartily approve of the extension of the practice of cooperation into the states which as yet have but few effective federations."⁴⁰

Smith and Guild, in the Commission's report on "Local Councils of Churches in 1921," said,⁴¹ "Each council has no official connection with any other council," but there is "a most fraternal relationship." It was then not so difficult to organize the larger cities that had two to ten (or more) years of continuous success. "Fewer than a dozen large cities do not have a council and an office"! The "Men's Federa-

tion," as the women literally often termed it, now included an increasing number of representative women delegates and committee members. In 1921 the FC Commission on Councils and Federations of Churches and the AES made a survey to see what place women had in councils and federations, and what societies of women were doing. Two states and twenty-four cities responded. It was agreed that local churches should be represented in federations or councils by laymen and lay women, as well as by their pastors; and that the lay woman should be chosen by the combined vote of the women's missionary organizations of the local church. Autonomous departments of women members, it was also agreed, should be related to the women's boards, home and foreign. In "unorganized" places, women were to be encouraged to organize their own councils, and "hold themselves ready to affiliate when a federation or council comes into existence."

The state situation was necessarily slow, since denominational action requires from twelve to eighteen months. The work done by the Commission was largely the result of that done by city and state secretaries—more than fifty men, and a few women, were then employed. Significantly, a list of *volunteer* councils was then being prepared. The financial situation was difficult, and there was also the pressure on the local churches of denominational Forward Movements.⁴²

At the 1922 annual meeting of the Association of Federation Secretaries, held May 31 at the Haskell Museum at the University of Chicago, as part of what again amounted to a "school of methods," May 29 to June 2, Rev. C. McLeod Smith of Toledo was elected president. Individual dues were increased to two dollars. Findings concerned evangelism, publicity, the international situation, religious education, state federations, civic betterment, moving pictures, race relations (apparently a new item), survey and comity, and women's work (also new).

The Price of Progress

On June 16, 1922, the Commission's Committee of Direction met for the first time in nearly a year, because of the almost continuous absence from the city of both its chairman and its secretary. Fred B. Smith had now returned from an eight-months' trip around the world in the interest of evangelism, church co-operation, and world peace. Chief unorganized cities included: Syracuse, Providence, Richmond, Va., Birmingham, Ala., New Orleans, Dallas, San Antonio, and Memphis. After reporting on developments in a number of other cities, "The secretary is of the opinion that he cannot out of justice to the

work nationally, devote so much time to single cities." "We are steadily reaching the point where the most important step must be taken, viz., developing the *state* councils of churches." "We are still confronted by the problem of finding . . . men. Between now and November about five will be required. One advantage we have today is the recognition of the fact that the man who makes good as a secretary can be sure of permanent employment. Men are less afraid to step out of established positions into a secretaryship." "With the passing of each year the program of work becomes both more intensive and extensive. The effort is being made to divert to other agencies the task that can be performed by them, and having the churches occupied in work that is peculiar to the church and will be done only as the churches co-operate." Elim A. E. Palmquist of Philadelphia, and Morris E. Alling of Connecticut, were elected to fill vacancies in the Commission, as representatives of the AES.

On December 7 increasing budgets and steady progress in specific cities were noted; and the organization of state councils, e.g., in such key states as New York and Illinois. The report to the Executive Committee of the Federal Council said that in comity there is "no short cut." Now about sixty men and women are employed by state and local councils. A budget of \$28,800, including \$3,000 for special agents and conferences, was approved.

A request was made by the Committee of Direction to the Church Peace Union for an appropriation to assist in the employment of a secretary to work in smaller places. It was recognized that "the Association of Employed Secretaries of Councils of Churches is the true dynamic of this movement."

In his 1922 report Dr. Guild featured developments in Minneapolis and in Ohio. Though Fred B. Smith was back, and addressed the Executive Committee of the Federal Council on "The Call of the Present Hour for Fuller Cooperation among the Churches,"⁴³ one suspects that the spell of his dynamic leadership had somehow been broken. In writing about "The Increasing Cooperation of the Churches" in their comments in "Community Cooperation,"⁴⁴ the general secretaries said, "To deal in any adequate way with the problem of co-operation in the community obviously requires an increase in resources both of men and money. Next to the need for strengthening the Council's work in evangelism, there is no more compelling necessity than at least one added secretary for the Commission on Councils of Churches." So wrote Drs. Macfarland and Cavert. In November, 1917,

the latter had become assistant secretary of the General War-Time Commission, thus beginning "a long and distinguished career with the Federal Council." After 1918 service as army chaplain he became secretary of the important special Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook. In April 1920, at the request of Dr. Macfarland, with whom he was associated for nearly thirty years, Dr. Cavert was elected associate secretary of the Federal Council, "having revealed just the qualities, in both nature and scope, which adapted him to the Administration."⁴⁵

A Long Pull Ahead

The Commission's report⁴⁶ on "The Churches Organizing for Community Cooperation" stressed the organization of new councils, the strategic place of the state council, and the full findings of the Conference of Allied Christian Agencies, held in Washington, D.C., October 17 and 18, submitted by a committee of which Dr. John M. Moore was chairman. In a Federal Council Executive Committee session Dr. Guild introduced the general subject of community cooperation;⁴⁷ Rev. F. E. Taylor spoke on city situations; and Rev. B. F. Lamb on state situations. Six official representatives of local councils were presented and addressed the Executive Committee briefly. In all, thirteen state and local councils were represented,⁴⁸ an indication both of the hospitality of the Federal Council and of the concern of the local leaders.⁴⁹ Here was sympathetic consideration, and large mutual interest; but somehow the situation began to bog down; the former momentum slackened; progress is leveling off. The best proof of this is the year-by-year count of effective local organizations:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of City Federations</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of City Federations</i>
1915	14	1920	47
1916	18	1921	48
1917	24	1924	48
1918	31	1929	43
1919	41	1931	49

What had been a crusade had become a chore; romance had changed to hard work. Gilbert and Sullivan are both as necessary as their successors in later decades, if there is to be light opera. Had the team of Smith and Guild drifted apart? The holding of national assemblies to rouse cooperative interest seemed to have reached the point of diminishing returns. The war was over; grandiose schemes and pan-

aceas proposed to put the church world to rights, and civilization along with it, had collapsed. After proposing a League of Nations, our nation refused to ratify it. Denominations had a new self-consciousness. Inter-denominationalism must seemingly plod along for a term of years, content to hold the ground it had gained. The stock market would pyramid, but in the decade then begun benevolence would not keep pace with prices.

In January, 1923, Harry N. Holmes was called to be an associate of Dr. Guild's, with particular reference to local agency relationships, in the light of the Washington Conference. On March 28 he cabled his acceptance. This action was in line with the vote of the Federal Council's Executive Committee recommending "to all national, regional, and state officials of the denominations that they give their fuller cooperation in the development of local councils of churches throughout the country"; and approving "the appointment of an additional secretary for the Commission on Councils of Churches as soon as funds can be secured."⁵⁰ Here was formal backing, with a clear Commission responsibility for securing the resources needed, and a staff increase in sight.

From May 28 to June 1, 1923, the Association of Executive Secretaries met at the Southern Hotel, Columbus, and elected Rev. L. W. McCreary of Baltimore as president. Sixty-six persons were listed and photographed, including 39 executives, Dr. Guild, and 40 secretaries from Ohio counties present at the May 31 annual meeting. Dr. Hugh S. Magill, General Secretary of the I.C.R.E., was present for a full day, considering mergers then pending. As Dr. Guild at the end of the year looked back on this gathering, he noted "a remarkable sense of unity (among) these entirely autonomous organizations because of this Association."

High Resolves

On December 12 to 14, 1923, the Executive Committee of the Federal Council voted: "That the method of church cooperation in local communities developed successfully by the Commission on Councils of Churches be pressed in cities that do not yet have organized cooperation, and that special attention be given to plans for securing effective cooperation under volunteer leadership in all communities where it is not practicable to employ executive secretaries."⁵¹

The 1923 Federal Council reports featured a section on "Co-operative Christianity in Action," and a review of the year by the

general secretaries,⁵² as well as a section entitled "Building from the Bottom Up."⁵³ A preliminary organization had been effected in Wyoming in 1923.⁵⁴

The Executive Committee again heard a presentation on "How Can the Movement for Community Cooperation among the Churches Be Strengthened and Extended?" Rockwell Harmon Potter of Hartford spoke for city situations, B. F. Lamb of Ohio for state situations. Eight others, at least half of them federation secretaries, also spoke. A total of eighteen state and local executives were present. The Commission's annual report⁵⁵ mentioned developments in Wilmington, Del., Illinois and Springfield; Buffalo and New York State; Omaha; and Scranton, Pa. According to the Federal Council's Board of Finance, there was now significant competition for the ecumenical dollar.⁵⁶

The Federal Council was now entering the fourth year of its fourth quadrennial. On May 2, 1924, Dr. Cavert raised the question with Dr. Guild as to whether the Federal Council was "expecting too much" of local councils; did it send them too much mail? Its purpose was to keep local councils informed, and maintain contacts with them in matters of varying importance, including finances. Would it help if all outgoing circulation cleared over Dr. Cavert's desk? In any case, "The cooperation of the Executive secretaries throughout the entire country has done more to make the Federal Council a reality than any other single thing. We deeply appreciate this cooperation, and will gratefully welcome any suggestions that will make this relationship stronger and more mutually helpful."⁵⁷

On May 20 the question of regional conferences in the South was raised, and another nation-wide conference, in the 1915-1917-1920 tradition, was referred to the AES for discussion in June. The possibility of a women's conference was also mentioned. In these minutes one brief, cryptic paragraph read: "Mr. Smith reported on the probable readjustment of the work of the Commission as to the scope of the program, the organization and personnel of the Commission, and the name." One senses possible changes in the offing.

On June 3 to 5 the AES met in Harris Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston, with 34 present, five of whom represented the Federal Council, to the great satisfaction of the state and local executives. A Conference on Women's Work was approved for the fall, in Pittsburgh. Provisional authorization of representatives of the AES as members of the Federal Council's Executive Committee was taken, subject to the action of the quadrennial meeting. Regional conferences

were discussed. Helen Yergin of St. Louis provided a five-page memo on the cooperation of churches, religious education, race relations, office management, evangelism, missionary education, women's work, radio, coordination, non-Protestants, and denominational competition. Dr. Charles R. Zahniser of Pittsburgh gave answers, and there was general discussion. Rev. E. T. Root, after twenty years of interdenominational service, was elected President.

The 1924 Atlanta Quadrennial Report ("United in Service, 1920-1924") shows forty-eight cities with paid executives, as compared with fewer than a dozen ten years earlier, but no more than there were in 1921. The organization of the ICRE had simplified religious education relationships at least nationally. "More and more the churches are recognizing that the Council is literally a council of churches." The Commission's 1924 report was made over three names: Smith, Guild, and Holmes.⁵⁸ During 1924 Colorado organized a Home Missions Council, and North Dakota an Interchurch Superintendents' Council.⁵⁹

Organized Church Women, The World, and The Community

One aspect of local federated women's work had been the widespread adoption of the Day of Prayer for Missions—Home and Foreign. For its promotion both the *Federation* of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions and the *Council* of Women for Home Missions joined in 1920. That same year marked the beginnings of what has now become a nation-wide program of migrant work, first suggested as an allocation to women's sponsorship in certain Interchurch World Movement surveys. In 1923 the first offerings for national and world projects were received at national women's headquarters. By 1924 there were approximately 1,200 local councils or federations of church women, probably mostly World Day of Prayer groups.

On December 11 and 12, 1924, at Pittsburgh, in response to the call of the FC and the AES, representatives of the Federation of Women's Boards considered the matter of unified approach in local communities. "No woman appeared on that program, but some did take part in discussion." There is considerable evidence that the clerical mind, chiefly masculine, was in danger of making the same misappraisal of women's work that it had earlier made in the reaction of many ministers to the Sunday School Movement and to the development of youth work. Women as an organized force, instead of being recognized as an asset, were too often regarded as an inescapable "problem." It was now "becoming increasingly evident that the two mission groups, organized for particular services, were not prepared

without certain internal adjustments to assume full responsibility for the inclusive programs foreshadowed in local organizations." Thus in every church of every communion, in every community, and throughout the states and nation, the integration of the program and machinery of the churches was undergoing constructive change.

The End of a Decade

On December 17, 1924, after a year of serious health impairment, Dr. Guild had written to Chairman Smith announcing his return to the pastorate December 31, thus terminating nearly a decade of service. The fourth quadrennial report⁶⁰ omits his name as senior secretary of the Commission. Times had changed. Said the retiring veteran, "It has been my hope to go forward with the more tedious but important work of forming state councils of churches. I fear, however, that this can better be carried on under new leadership." Attached to this letter is the 1915 memo of "Suggestions" about the work he had then been called to undertake. The aims there set forth had been largely accomplished.

On December 31 S. Parkes Cadman, president of the Federal Council, wrote to twenty-one persons requested to serve as the Committee of Direction of the Commission on Councils of Churches, nominated by Fred B. Smith, who had again been asked to serve as the Commission chairman: "It is believed that . . . the way will be clear by which the Commission will be called on to undertake larger responsibility, as the result of the striking program up to the present time."

Nearly a two-year interval followed, however, without executive leadership other than that of Harry Holmes.⁶¹ Seemingly Dr. Guild had secured money, though not always enough, for the regular Commission task, including his own salary, thanks to the loyal support of friends able to give it; and Fred B. Smith had been able to get the money for the more spectacular gatherings. The two men, with their complementary gifts, made a good team. Dr. Macfarland wrote years later of Fred B. Smith as an "exponent of the ideal" of church and community organization, and of Dr. Guild as "the organizing genius" of the federation movement.⁶²

Details of Commission finances need not concern us, but the overall picture may be of interest. First, the comparative size of the Federal Council operations is indicated by the increase in its budget from less than \$35,000 in 1913 to nearly \$150,000 in 1916, with the \$300,000 mark in sight in 1924. Church cooperation was beginning to

strike its stride. Did those in the local and state federations, who eagerly sought help from the Federal Council, and a share in the making of its policies, have any adequate comprehension of what hard work it had been to transform the meager resources of the Federal Council into these relatively ample figures?

Only during the past two years of the Federal Council's second quadrennium did the Commission on Federated Movements begin to get under way. Its financial status from year to year, as reported in its minutes and by the Federal Council treasurer, was substantially this: For its first seven years all had gone well with the Commission, financially; at the end of 1922 it was still in the black. So far, so good. Expenditures in 1923 had increased to \$21,749.97, with no corresponding increase in income; at the end of that year—in spite of a contribution of \$4,000 from the Church Peace Union—the Commission had a deficit of \$2,377.98.⁶³ There were now two men on the staff; could the craft carry so much sail?

The expenses of the Commission in 1924 increased to \$23,939.84, producing, in spite of a second contribution of \$4,000 from the Church Peace Union, a \$7,277.62 "debit balance," due the general treasury of the Federal Council. This was only one—but the largest—of four Federal Council deficits, fortunately offset by two balances, but leaving a net deficit of \$8,789.48, over against a reserve fund of \$10,000.⁶⁴ There would seem to be an obvious connection between the departure of Dr. Guild and this financial situation.

Two budgets were proposed for 1925. Concerning the \$17,000 for local and state organization,⁶⁵ as part of a regular Federal Council budget of \$272,100, it was stipulated that "This addition to the budget will need to be raised by special effort on the part of friends of the extension of local federations." To a second provisional addition to the budget amounting to \$19,400 was added the proviso, "In view of the reorganization of measures for the development of local and state organizations, the following addition to the budget is authorized, contingent on the organization of this work and the securing of funds from special sources. The name and program of the Commission (were still) under consideration."

Such proposals were clearly ambivalent. Was it the intent to revive the dual purpose of the original Commission on Federated Movements? Was Fred B. Smith dissatisfied with merely ecclesiastical forms of cooperation? In the light of so serious a deficit, was this the time to expand? What was the cause of the deficit? Was there a difference

of opinion as to objectives? Could the former momentum be retained? Seemingly Dr. Guild felt stalemated, perhaps through sheer lack of financial resources. Whatever the reason, physical or otherwise, he resolved to withdraw from the scene at least for a while.

Health considerations⁶⁶ were accepted as a valid occasion for his seeking less strenuous employment, but they were not mentioned in his letter of resignation.

Throughout this entire determinative period there were two forces clearly at work: the down-from-the-top, out-from-the-center promotion by the Federal Council's Commission, slow as compared with the Interchurch World Movement, but sure; and the up-from-the-bottom, outward from city to city and state to state teamwork, chiefly professional, of the state and local federations or councils of churches. In retrospect it is plain, too, that a number of impersonal factors had contributed to the "slowing up" process noticeable between 1920 and 1924. Not the least of these was the economic cycle through which the nation was passing. In addition to minor "recessions," long before the stock-market crash in 1929, local churches and denominations began to anticipate or experience the effects of lessening benevolences, even at a time when there seemed to be plenty of money. And it was during this period that the long-standing organization of Sunday school workers, state and local, begun in 1892, and organized as the Employed Officers' Association in 1916, seems somehow to have been allowed to lapse.

Moreover, the meteoric coming and going of the Interchurch World Movement, with its first brilliant promise, its brief span, and its sudden demise, had doubtless induced a weariness comparable to that of the post-war reaction: December 1918 to June 1920 was more than an interruption—it served also to burn over the ground and induce a certain skepticism concerning all "ambitious" projects. This in turn made necessary a down-to-earth reality in the organizing and conduct of councils of churches at every level, not without its permanent values.

The year 1915 had marked a new beginning; 1924 saw the completion of this period of vigorous expansion. Fortunately, within five years Dr. Guild, his health recovered, was to return to his old task, and see the movement reach forward to a time when under new circumstances it would again expand with greater vigor than ever. Meanwhile Chapter VI will cover another period of appraisal, when the movement sought to catch its breath for a new start.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter V

- ¹ Cf. *FC 1915 Report*, pp. 53, 54.
- ² Abbreviated from the findings of the June 1915 Atlantic City meeting.
- ³ Macfarland, *Progress of Church Cooperation*, p. 128.
- ⁴ *FC 1918 Report*, pp. 46-48.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- ⁶ Cf. *The Churches of Christ in Council*, 1917, Vol. I of *Library of Christian Cooperation*, MEM, pp. 184, 185.
- ⁷ Macfarland, *Progress of Church Federation*, p. 49.
- ⁸ As it turned out, a whole group of Home Mission Councils expanded into or became part of inclusive councils of churches, under the strong encouragement of the HMC. (Cf. the earlier discussion of home mission states, in Chapter III.)
- ⁹ Macfarland, *ibid.*, p. 129.
- ¹⁰ Cited in *ibid.*, p. 130.
- ¹¹ *The Churches of Christ in Council*, pp. 45, 46.
- ¹² *Christian Cooperation and World Redemption*, pp. 245-274; cf. also Macfarland, *Progress of Church Federation*, p. 128; and Dr. Guild's semi-annual report.
- ¹³ *The Churches of Christ in Council*, p. 74.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- ¹⁶ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 62; (also *HMC 1916 Report*.)
- ¹⁷ Cf. also *International Journal* editorial, November, 1930: "Why Not the Consolidated Sunday School?"
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- ¹⁹ *FC 1917 Year Book*, pp. 36, 38.
- ²⁰ "In April, 1912, at the close of the Men and Religion conventions, a group of Christian men agreed that in five years there ought to be a representative gathering to summarize the progress of cooperative Christian effort and to issue the manual which is here submitted." (From Fred B. Smith's introduction to the 1917 *Manual of Interchurch Work*.)
- ²¹ Cf. this writer in *FC Bulletin*, March, 1950—33 years later.
- ²² The Commission's 72 members were listed in the *1917 Year Book*, pp. 276, 277; again in 1918, pp. 208, 209; and in 1919, pp. 210, 211. The Smith-Guild report for 1917 appears on pp. 146-152 of the *FC 1917 Report*; Dr. Anthony's on pp. 139-145 (cf. pp. 42, 43 for the list of Dr. Anthony's commission).
- ²³ *FC 1917 Report*, pp. 22, 64.
- ²⁴ Footnote, p. 51 of the (Pittsburgh) *Manual*.
- ²⁵ Minutes of the Committee of Direction, October 23, 1918.
- ²⁶ Cf. Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, pp. 142, 148; also the *FC 1917-1918 report*, pp. 14, 15, 90, 91, 155, 156.
- ²⁷ *FC 1918 Report*, pp. 6, 85-91.
- ²⁸ *FC 1919 Report*, pp. 8, 86-92.
- ²⁹ Handy, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-82.
- ³⁰ Douglass, *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, pp. 43, 50.
- ³¹ On the other hand, "No war has ever helped the cause of vital religion. Religion always slumps as a result. At no time in the history of organized religion in America has it been at such low ebb as after our great wars." Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*, Harper, 1930 (revised edition, 1939), p. 564.

- ³² See *Continent*, June 24, 1940, editorial.
- ³³ *The Churches Allied for Common Tasks*, 1916-1920, p. 225; the Commission's report, "The Churches United in Service to the Community," appears on pp. 217-224. The entire Commission is listed on pp. 221 ff., the names of the Committee of Direction on p. 411.
- ³⁴ *The Churches Allied for Common Tasks*, pp. 9-18: "An Interpretation," by Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert; *ibid.*, p. 12 (contrast p. 70).
- ³⁵ *FC Bulletin*, January, 1921, p. 18.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, March, 1921, p. 30.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, June-July, 1921, a two-page lead-article, "Building from the Bottom Up," by Orlo J. Price, reported this meeting. (The October-November issue included a page of AES findings.)
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, August-September, 1921, p. 104.
- ³⁹ *FC 1921 Report*, p. 185.
- ⁴⁰ *Cf. ibid.*, p. 17: "A United Approach to Common Problems."
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-53.
- ⁴² *Cf. Handy, op. cit.*, p. 77.
- ⁴³ *FC 1922 Report*, p. 183.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁴⁵ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, pp. 136, 175, 183.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-33.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 193.
- ⁴⁹ Only the officers of the Commission are now listed, *ibid.* p. 222. The western office begins to assume importance for field relationships, *ibid.* pp. 113 ff.
- ⁵⁰ Letter, Dr. Macfarland to Dr. Guild, January 13, 1923; see also *FC 1922 Minutes*.
- ⁵¹ *United in Service* (1920-1924), p. 301.
- ⁵² *FC 1923 Report*, pp. 14 ff.; 33-37.
- ⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 30 ff.
- ⁵⁴ *FC Bulletin*, March, 1928.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-43; "The Development of Local Councils of Churches."
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 209.
- ⁵⁷ *Cf. letter*, this writer, to Dr. Cavert, October 7, 1932.
- ⁵⁸ *United in Service*, pp. 101-104. Similarly, all three men are listed on p. 233 of the *FC 1923 Report*.
- ⁵⁹ *FC Bulletin*, March, 1928.
- ⁶⁰ *United in Service*, p. 373. (Dr. Guild had accepted a call to the Trinitarian Congregational Church of New Bedford, Mass.)
- ⁶¹ Though Dr. Macfarland (*Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 267) says that Holmes succeeded Guild, it was hardly more than an interim arrangement.
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 133.
- ⁶³ *FC 1923 Report*, p. 221; also p. 233. (The relation of corporate to personal and ecclesiastical contributions merits and has received study.)
- ⁶⁴ *FC 1924 Report*, pp. 333, 338.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 328, 330.
- ⁶⁶ Macfarland, *op. cit.*, pp. 102, 261, states that Dr. Guild's "health broke in 1925" and that he "had resigned because of a breakdown."

Appraisal and Testing, 1925-1931

Midway in the baffling twenties 1925 was significant for all of Christendom by reason of the *Stockholm* Conference on "Life and Work," but in America it marked an unquestionable slump in the promotion of state and local cooperation. On the other hand, these years were to show that state and local church cooperation involved a variety of existing national agencies. If Chapter II of this volume seems extraneous to the interest of some readers, and if the assumed centrality of ecclesiastical mechanisms is offensive to others, this is all of a piece with the frustration by which some of us, working enthusiastically at the grass-roots, were confused. But, out of complexity coherence and unification were already beginning to appear, first on the far horizon, soon in the foreseeable future.

Defining the Federal Council's Field Task

The Federal Council now voted to approve "the principle of a division between the task, on the one hand, of organizing, assisting, and maintaining relations with local councils of churches, and on the other hand, of promoting on the field the ideal and aims of the federated movement as a whole"¹; and to secure a secretary to carry out the former task.

The 1925 *FC Report on Field Organization*, in the "Review of the Year," "proposed that the work of helping to organize and sustain local and state councils of churches will in the future be a direct responsibility of the Federal Council itself, under the immediate supervision of the Administrative Committee."

Here was explicit recognition of two facts: (1) Whatever the responsibility of the Federal Council might be for the wider integration of all federative efforts in the community, it had an unavoidable responsibility for state and local councils; and (2) in the light of the accumulated deficit, which presumably had to be absorbed, it might be wise to make this concern less peripheral, and subsume it under the general work of the Council so that fiscal as well as program policies could be more closely supervised. The depression was nearly four years away, but the field work of the Federal Council had already temporarily crashed.

In 1925 the Church Peace Union contributed \$2,000 for the Federal Council's field work, and other designated receipts amounted to \$600; costs were \$4,747.30. A 1926 estimated budget of \$14,000 for state and local field work was suggested, as compared with much larger dual proposals a year earlier.³

State and Local Thinking

While the April 16, 1925, meeting of the Executive Committee of the AES at the Town Hall Club, New York, seemed strange without Dr. Guild, by this time the Association had acquired its own momentum. State and local leaders were becoming articulate as to the nationwide cooperative task. Representation on various Federal Council groups was discussed, and "suggestions were made for training secretaries." It was felt that "if the Federal Council was now in a position to employ two field men, one should be a specialist in state organization."

"By unanimous verdict one of the most profitable sessions ever"⁴ was held by the Association of Executive Secretaries June 16 to 18, 1925. Its annual meeting in connection with a conference and retreat on evangelism at East Northfield, Mass., was made possible by the Church Peace Union. Thirty-four were present. Ralph C. McAfee, then executive at Kansas City, Mo., was elected president. Twenty-seven federations had contributed toward total receipts of \$273.36 for the fiscal year, which closed with a balance of \$60.06. Replies to a questionnaire, sent out by E. T. Root and this writer, came from forty city and five state councils.

Suggestions offered for improving local conditions sound strangely contemporary:

Special training for secretaries and assistants.

Development of the spirit of fellowship.

More adequate financing.

More intimate relations between local and national work.

Regional conferences.

Larger and more active lay participation.

Continuous kindly effort, showing and cultivating the spirit of cooperation.

Taking more time for reading and study.

TIME and KEEPING AT IT.

While findings on evangelism were central, consideration was also given to comity, international justice and good will, religious education

(especially in its merger aspects), women's work, and finance. Proportionate dues (\$5, \$10, or \$20) were suggested from federations with budgets of varying size, together with the recommendation that dues be paid "from the local budget and not by the executive secretary"! "Past, Present and Future" were discussed. "Of the eleven secretaries who attended the first conference, three are still in the service and attendance at this meeting."⁵ "Further Steps That Should Be Taken" concurred with the Federal Council field proposals.

Joint Search for New Leadership

In December 1925 the AES Executive Committee appointed a committee to confer with the Federal Council concerning Dr. Guild's successor. Meanwhile, in November, a special Committee of Five, named by the Administrative Committee to consider the Federal Council's responsibility for the development of local councils, had nominated B. F. Lamb, of the Ohio Federation of Churches, to help both the Federal and the Home Mission Councils in field organization. The Committee was to continue its consideration of state council promotion. Nominated November 30, on December 10 Dr. Lamb indicated that he could not accept the nomination on the terms on which it had been proposed.

June 3 to 5, 1926, in connection with the FC Commission on Social Service meeting at the National Conference of Social Work, the AES met at the Hotel Winton, Cleveland, with an attendance of 57. Dr. Elim A. E. Palmquist of Philadelphia was elected president. A 1927 Women's Work Conference was proposed. The committee to confer about Dr. Guild's successor was continued. Income for the year had risen to \$434.40, and there was a balance of \$42.46 in the treasury.

In January 1926 Dr. Anthony had raised with the FC Administrative Committee four basic questions as to local, state, and national council relationships.⁶ There was also discussion of closer coordination among the various interdenominational bodies (particularly the FC, HMC, and ICRE) for the sake of simplifying the problem of cooperation in the local community and closer relations with the local councils. (This was nearly a quarter of a century before the organization of the National Council of Churches.) In February, in deference to "the secretaries who will have responsibility in this field," the Administrative Committee felt that thorough-going discussion of all such issues should be postponed until "after the new secretary for work in connection with state and local councils of churches is secured."⁷

Nevertheless in July the Administrative Committee gave important consideration to relations with the ICRE.⁸ A historic letter, approved by the AES on June 5, was presented in behalf of that body by Orlo J. Price of *Rochester, N.Y.*; W. L. Darby, of the *Washington, D.C.* Federation, also spoke. Both men reported that the AES favored expanding its annual meeting into a conference of the secretaries of the Federal Council and all State and Local Councils. In receiving the communication from the AES the Administrative Committee expressed warm sympathy with its general intent, and recognized "the great importance of giving special attention to the development of church cooperation in state and local communities." The AES secretaries had in turn developed a considerable ecclesiastical sense, with increasingly clear realization of the dependence of the federations on the churches and the denominations.

John Milton Moore, a Federal Council Secretary, 1926-1931

At this July 9, 1926, meeting, on nomination of the Policy Committee, the Administrative Committee now proceeded to elect Dr. John Milton Moore, who had been for four years (1921-1924) chairman of the Administrative Committee, as a general secretary, to give special attention to developing state and local cooperation. "Successsively president of the Brooklyn and Greater New York Federations of Churches," as well, "Dr. Moore brought to the staff a rare combination of wisdom, genial fellowship, and loyalty. Under his administration interest in state and local federation was revived and to some extent reorganized," wrote Dr. Macfarland.⁹

On November 1, while still serving part-time as pastor of the Marcy Ave. Baptist Church, Brooklyn, an important congregation soon to be caught in the throes of swift population change, Dr. Moore sent out a cordial letter, as one of the general secretaries of the Federal Council. All rejoiced with him "now that we have an office again in the Federal Council which you may use as a clearing house." It was twenty-two months since Dr. Guild's departure, and this long interval had been keenly felt by state and local federations and councils. Doubtless it was symptomatic of deeper forces, now rearranging themselves in new patterns of field outreach.

Incidentally Dr. Moore reported: "We are moving to get the New York State Council (of Churches) into action, and with prospects of success; there has recently been organized a State Council in New Jersey." (In 1908 the New York State Council had been reported as first organized in 1900, and New Jersey was then "in process.") Signifi-

cant, also, as a first inkling of a determinative report now in the offing, he added, "There is likely to be conducted by the Institute of Social and Religious Research a study of Protestant cooperation which will mean a careful scientific survey of perhaps twenty-five or more federations. I am hoping that this project will go through, for it seems to be what we greatly need."

By November it had been decided that the whole program of the Federal Council's Executive Committee in Minneapolis the following month should be centered on problems of state and local cooperation.¹⁰ under the general theme: "How to Make Church Cooperation Real and Vital in the Community."¹¹ The careful findings of these December 1926 meetings do not seem to have blazed any new trails, in spite of a series of two to four groups of questions raised on each of a dozen discussion themes.

Designations for state and local work in 1926 provided the Federal Council with \$7,335.00. Expenses were low enough to result in an unexpended credit balance of \$3,862.34 as contrasted with the crippling deficit of two years earlier.¹³ A 1927 budget of \$15,000 for state and local cooperation was accepted.¹⁴

Journalistic Straws in the 1926 Wind

The Federal Council Bulletin for January-February 1926 included a significant article by Orlo J. Price of Rochester, voicing the growing desire "to hold back the tides of denominationalism." (Later strategy was to exploit denominational loyalties in behalf of interdenominational cooperation.) The July 1926 *Christian Union Quarterly* was largely devoted to the Federal Council. Its editor Dr. Peter Ainslie asked, "Shall We Federate the Federations?" (So far, a negative answer to this question has always been made, at least in practice.) During these and the ensuing years both the *FC Bulletin* and the *ICRE Journal* provided many interesting details of organizational development and personnel changes, and of the difficulties involved in the merging of councils of religious education and federations of churches.

Lessened Momentum

The year 1927 wrote "Faith and Order" and *Lausanne* into the memory of all ecumenical Christians. In February Dr. Moore sent out a brief questionnaire, replies to which enabled him to make interesting statistical comparisons for the years 1917, 1922, and 1927. By March he was convinced that "We need to do some solid thinking about our whole enterprise. . . . It may be . . . that we have fairly exhausted

the initial momentum of our federation movement; . . . no new organizations are being formed, and we are having some difficulty in keeping alive the existing ones.”¹⁵ (This is a little like watching a doughnut maker, and remarking, “What large holes there are in all these doughnuts!” From 1895 to 1915 there had been heavy losses, but a dozen permanent federations survived; from 1915 to 1925 there was substantial growth, after deducting all casualties.)

In 1926 state councils of religious education spent \$651,185.82, and had 137 staff and 91 office employees. Said Robert Davids, ICRE director of organization and promotion, “The financial problem in our state and provincial councils (of religious education) is acute. They are struggling with debts amounting to over \$200,000, or an average of one-third of their operating budgets. Only eleven are free of debt.”¹⁶ Too often the emphasis was necessarily on finance, rather than on education, even in the years before the depression.

The ICRE and Its “Auxiliary” Councils

As has been indicated, the ICRE started off in 1922 with both denominational and territorial member units. Though the question as to what requirements denominations might properly be expected to meet was inevitably considered, denominational educational forces were always considered full members in the enterprise. Imperceptibly perhaps as a result of long-standing denominational pressures dating back to 1910 or earlier the nature of state and provincial council participation began to change. In a very few years the territorial units began to be termed “auxiliaries” rather than members. This is not to blame anybody, but simply to record a fact.

The ICRE too had been slowly evolving its field policy. One phase of the problem that had faced the Federal Council faced the ICRE also in 1925. The new *Salt Lake City* Council of Religious Education had sent a request for supervision by the ICRE, which felt that “some plan should be outlined whereby City Councils of Religious Education in unorganized territory may have direct supervision from the ICRE.”¹⁷

Standards of representativeness and competence were being worked out, and the dependence of the ICRE on the state councils was generously recognized;¹⁸ but perhaps unconsciously the role of the state councils as agents of the ICRE was increasingly stressed. In January 1926¹⁹ Dr. Magill was writing about the purpose “of the International Council and its auxiliary councils.” The February *Journal* honored the

state councils by featuring the pictures of 48 state secretaries. In an April 1926 "Interpretation" of the ICRE,²⁰ while recognizing that "local councils of religious education represent the churches of the city, county, or community in all cooperative efforts," Dr. Magill again spoke of these local councils as "auxiliaries of the International and state councils, to carry into effect the cooperative interdenominational programs developed through the International Council." Thus the agreed reorganization of the state bodies on a more representative basis seemed to have shifted their status from the constitutive role to that of agent.

In June one of the old guard, E. W. Halpenny of *Michigan*, representing the Sunday School Association tradition, was given the opportunity to put in a constructive comment on "The Place of the State Council":²¹ "For twenty-five years I gave the best that was in me to the cooperative Sunday school effort under the old regime (independent), and some may still contend therefor, doubtless with good arguments in favor. I am compelled to express delight at being now privileged to direct the activities of a state, 'reorganized' as carefully as possible, both in letter and spirit, auxiliary to the International Council. There are some who feel that the strength of the ICRE lies at the top where an ever-increasingly efficient correlation of forces is demonstrated. I would not in any sense underestimate that feature, but am convinced that the more important function is that of the state council, where the principles involved must be demonstrated."

In February 1927, after stressing the importance of having councils of religious education administered by persons with "special educational fitness and particular interest in religious education,"²² Dr. Magill generously continued, "Councils of religious education should have autonomy of action, but there should be *the closest possible co-operation* between them and the federations of churches which function in the general field of denominational cooperation." He then went on: "Although as the constituent bodies that make up the International Council, state councils have equal powers with the cooperating denominations, they should function as auxiliaries of the International Council and not as autonomous or independent organizations. The purpose of state and city councils of religious education is to serve as the accredited agencies of the cooperating forces within the various areas, just as the International Council serves as the accredited agency of the cooperating forces for the entire continent." (Was there ever any corresponding discussion of voluntary self-limitation of autonomy on

the part of the denominations? Certainly the ICRE never spoke of its "auxiliary" denominations, nor was there ever any question as to the autonomy of the member denominations. Yet the State Sunday School Associations thought they were going into the new relationship on a basis of equality with the denominations, i.e., "50-50." In practice, "equal powers" soon became unequal.)

Perhaps sensing that the ICRE's service role needed emphasis, Dr. Robert M. Hopkins, in the October 1927 *Journal*, insisted, "The Council is not a super-organization, giving orders to its constituent bodies, but is rather their accredited agency through which they federate their forces for cooperative service. The program of the International Council is determined by the duly chosen representatives of these cooperating forces." (Fortunately the word "accredited" has also largely dropped out; it was more of an irritant than some suspected.)

"Cooperation and Beyond"

Meanwhile, on the other hand, in April 1927²³ Dr. Moore of the Federal Council staff had become convinced that some sort of ecclesiastical "federal union," more intimate than that provided by the Federation movement, was possible and desirable. To him "the Federal Council . . . and the fifty standard state and city councils (of churches) now in existence . . . would seem to have reached a stage of cooperative action corresponding to the period of the American Articles of Confederation." (The correctness of this analysis need not be questioned; but could anything be done about it?)

By May Dr. Moore was writing, "See you soon in St. Louis." The May *FC Bulletin* gave half a page to announcing the AES meeting and the topics to be discussed; and the June number featured "National, State, and Local Councils in Annual Conference," in generous recognition of the FC interest in state and local organizations. What had really happened, however, was that only the church federation professional staff people were again in helpful sessions together. On June 1, at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, 34 local and state members of the AES and no less than 14 representatives of the Federal Council had held a four-day annual meeting. Here Dr. Moore was affectionately greeted as the new leader, and secretaries were requested to send both to him and to Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, of *Information Service*, "every piece of well-conceived publicity material." Dr. Macfarland graciously invited attendance at all important Federal Council Commission meetings. In its findings the AES declared that "the next outstanding objective in the program of the Federal Council is the

further extension of the cooperative movement throughout the nation.” This writer was elected AES president. Receipts had amounted to \$475.95, and a balance of \$32.96 remained.

By early August Dr. Moore reported that he had travelled 43,000 miles in ten months; he was seeing the field. In September he asked local and state executives:

“1. Have you grave financial problems?

“2. If not, tell us briefly what your financial plan is.

“3. Do you think that the Federal Council should . . . furnish expert financial leadership to the councils at small cost?” At the end of 1927 Dr. Moore was sure that “we need a more thoroughgoing philosophy of the whole enterprise.”

The 1927 *Report of the Federal Council* devoted only a single page²⁴ to state and local cooperation, mentioning that Dr. Moore’s more than 50,000 miles of travel had made for “much closer contacts.” In the reported findings of a comity conference²⁵ attention was given to city councils of churches as essentially church city planning commissions, and to²⁶ relations with the YMCA. At the end of the year, though designated income appears to have been only \$3,862.34, there remained an unexpended balance of \$256.62 for the extension of state and local cooperation;²⁷ and a budget of \$12,500 was deemed sufficient for 1918.²⁸ Extension was now central, but it was not creating a very big splash!

Reduced Resources

Perhaps the causes for what was failing to happen lay deeper than the actors in the play realized. Handy²⁹ speaks about “the decay of Protestant vitality in the 1920’s,” and the general tone of the decade is well remembered. He is impressed that “interdenominational organizations . . . were less deeply rooted than the denominations.”³⁰ He found “the Cooperative road running through rough country in the middle and later 1920’s.” (If some of us were unaware of this, we may have been blessed by the help of exceptional lay backers.) Moreover, Dr. W. R. King, who became executive of the Home Missions Council in the fall of 1927, said in January 1928, “Almost all major *denominations* are now in a period of financial stringency in the conduct of mission work. We are in the days of falling budgets. There has been more or less retrenchment all along the line, and new work has been for several years at a standstill.” By 1928, a year and a half before the stock market crash, “twenty years after their founding, the home mission councils were facing a crisis.”³¹

In January 1928 Dr. Moore circulated a Christian unity "Syllabus," which he feared might be loaded in favor of federal union. From May 1928 to June 1930 a printed four-page *Council News Letter* kept all its readers informed of changes in personnel and other significant news.

An important Conference on Church Comity was held in Cleveland, January 20 to 22, 1928, under the auspices of the Home Missions Council and the Council of Women for Home Missions.³² This was also the year of the Jerusalem Conference,³³ which marked great progress as compared with the 1910 Edinburgh meeting, when Orientals had been almost entirely absent. At Jerusalem many nationals were present, dominating the delegations from China, India, Burma, and Japan. This was not without significance for cooperation at the grass-roots, even in America.

Awakened Desires

The 1928 annual meeting of the AES, May 31 to June 2, at the Statler, Buffalo, attracted 27 state and local executives, nine of the Federal Council staff, and eleven others—a total of 47. Dr. Moore spoke on Federal Union. An evening communion service was memorable to all present. The Institute of Social and Religious Research was asked to study seminary instruction on interdenominational cooperation. The National Conference of Church Women had now been effected, with a budget of \$10,000; this was one stage in the long development of the United Council of Church Women. B. F. Lamb, newly elected president of the AES, had a vigorous column in the September *News Letter*.³⁴

The only surviving minutes of the Advisory Committee for several years during this period are those of the November 5, 1928, meeting. Fifteen persons were present. Dr. Moore reported as to the status of local councils as revealed by questionnaire replies. A letter from Fred B. Smith was read. There was discussion as to how a local federation should be related to the state federation and to the Federal Council. To the question, "Is the movement stalled?" the answer was *No*. When asked what was the matter with it, Root replied: "The fundamental difficulty in organizing a state council is money." Was more national field staff needed? In any case, insisted Dr. Moore, "We need to undergird the movement with a better theory."

The Federal Council annual reports for 1928³⁵ discussed "Two Fruitful Decades of Community Cooperation,"³⁶ listing 44 city councils

of churches, most of them with full-time executives. Said Dr. Moore, "The experience of cooperation has awakened desire and expectation that mere Cooperation is not able to satisfy. Some larger unity calls, and its call will be heard." (These prophetic words could be countered not so much with denial as with questions as to tempo.)

A January 1929 *FC Bulletin* editorial on the Rochester quadrennial likewise remarked: "The cooperative movement meets with general approval. But it is quite apparent that Cooperation has awakened expectations which are not going to be permanently satisfied with cooperation only"—a good instance of the freedom of the Federal Council to publicize individual viewpoints, while at the same time unable itself to implement the desires of some for greater union.

Proposals for Radical Change

On November 12 and 13, 1928, in connection with a meeting of the World Alliance for International Friendship, ten representative local, state, and national secretaries had met at the Waldorf-Astoria for breakfast. They discussed the work of the AES and how to strengthen it, and relationships with the Federal Council. A committee of five *recommended that the Association be reorganized as one of councils* rather than secretaries, and that each employed executive be matched by a board member from his council. All the members of the AES were to be informed of these proposals, and the Federal Council was to be requested to consider their effect on its By-Laws. Final action was deferred until the next AES annual meeting.

At Rochester on December 5 to 8, 1928, in connection with the Federal Council quadrennial, 30 state and local secretaries, several members of the Federal Council staff, and a number of guests attended three special breakfast sessions and a dinner meeting of the AES. The reorganization proposals were approved, and a new Constitution and By-Laws (mimeographed under date of December 7) unanimously adopted. It was voted "to consider the new organization fully authorized when the majority of the federations and councils of churches with executive secretaries have approved the Constitution and named their delegates." Action by March 1 was to be sought from all state and local boards.

Voting membership on the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council for four representatives of the AES was speedily granted. The December 1928 and January 1929 *Council News Letter* featured the action that "extension of local federation be made a major feature

of the Council's policy for the coming quadrennium," and the seeming formation of "The Association of *Councils* of Churches, State and Local." Dr. Cadman in his retiring presidential message had stated that in his judgment the most important task before the Federal Council was that of organizing state and local councils. Representatives of state and local councils were welcomed on all Federal Council commissions as appointees. It looked like a new day. Extension was now central to national staff responsibility. A strong Committee on Function and Structure was to reassess the whole Federal Council process. But Dr. Charles R. Zahniser of the Pittsburgh Council of Churches pointed out that "promising outlook itself is not fulfillment."

Within three weeks, on December 27 and 28, at New York City, eleven members of the Federal Council Administrative Committee and six representatives of the AES took affirmative action on general principles, but avoided discussion and decision on many matters of detail. Somehow the revolutionary character of the Rochester proposals began to ooze out, and trickle down the drain. They seem soon to have been entirely forgotten. But an enlarged Advisory Committee on Church Extension was created by the Administrative Committee, replacing a rather informal, chiefly staff, group. This new committee met February 20, 1929, to organize.³⁷

Extension expenses for 1928 had been³⁸ \$12,184.48, and a balance of \$1,481.08 remained toward the 1929 \$12,500 budget.³⁹ During 1928, at the beginning of "seven lean years" for the Home Missions Council, Dr. King also "travelled widely, visiting every home missions council and cooperating in the organization of seven new ones."⁴⁰ This was fractional and functional organization, rather than inclusive; but it was a beginning. The cooperative toe was again, or for the first time, in many a door.

Between 1924 and 1929 there was a loss of only five federations, and in only one southern state were two local organizations dropped from the list (Richmond and Norfolk, Va.).⁴¹

Beginning with the 1929 *News Letter*, "volunteer" councils were first noted, then listed; increasing attention was also given to ministerial associations as incipient councils of churches. On February 20, 1929, with 19 present, the new Committee on Extension of Local and State Cooperation met and organized, with Dr. L. W. McCreary, former Baltimore Federation secretary, as chairman. The next day the Administrative Committee approved this committee's recommendation, and referred it back for further discussion: "that two additional members

be added to the extension staff, a field man and an educational man, but that the educational position be provided for first." ("Educational" here referred to the training of students in theological schools for inter-church cooperation).⁴²

Dr. Guild Returns

On March 21, 1929, a little more than four years after he had withdrawn, the Committee on Extension recommended that Dr. Guild be elected Associate General Secretary, to serve with Dr. Moore, and to be resident in Chicago. On the following day he was elected by the Administrative Committee; he began work on April 10, to continue until his retirement in 1937, and in fellowship with the movement until his death in 1945. Provision was also made for a special lecturer in theological schools, for an experimental period of a year.

Within months the depression was to hit. How largely morale and finances were intertwined is a matter of keen remembrance on the part of all surviving oldsters. On March 25 Dr. Moore wrote confidently, "At the quadrennial meeting at Rochester it was agreed that extension of state and local federation should be a major feature of the Council's work for the coming quadrennium. The calling of Dr. Guild indicates that this proposal is being taken seriously, and significant developments in this field may reasonably be expected." To this all those veterans who had worked with Dr. Guild responded with a fervent "Amen."

In early 1929 everybody was still talking big. The idea that a world-wide financial collapse was just over the hill had occurred only to the relatively few people of superior economic literacy and experience. In spite of the strengthening of his hands by the reemployment of Dr. Guild, and partly because of his disappointment over the failure of the Federal Union movement to make concrete progress, Dr. Moore, along with millions of others, was in for a rough experience. In March he sent out his annual questionnaire, as the basis of a later valuable historical summary.

In April the FC Committee on Extension stressed the desirability of relating local federations of women, with proper autonomy, with local councils of churches; and considered how, in practice, the work of the various Federal Council commissions might be more closely correlated in their field contacts. Dr. Zahniser was to be nominated as special lecturer in the seminaries.

Dr. Zahniser had resigned at Pittsburgh May 15, and was to be professor of Community and Interchurch Relationships at the Boston University School of Theology. (This was thirty-one years ago!) In a first summer term, June 17 to July 24, at the University of Chicago, Dr. Arthur E. Holt and Dr. Cavert each taught four hours a week; additional lectures over a four-week period reached a larger audience. A beginning of the training process, at the graduate level, had been made.⁴³

By May 1929 there were 43 city and six state councils of churches, in addition to one in Puerto Rico. The 1929 Federal Council report included a far-reaching statement: "The Federal Council agrees in so far as practicable to look to the Educational Commission of the International Council for the service hitherto rendered by its Commission on Christian Education."⁴⁴

From June 17 to 21, 1929, the AES held its annual meeting at the Hotel Bellevue, Boston. Including five guests, fifty-four persons were present. Simultaneous committee meetings were featured; also sightseeing and addresses. "Certain changes in the situation" were said to have occurred since the December meetings in Rochester. In spite of the fact that an "organization committee" had been voted, the "provisional" president of the proposed new Association of Councils continued to function as head of the old AES, and the proposed re-organization seems to have died a-borning. Considerable wood was being sawed, however, while it was still day, before the dark night of depression would reduce all cooperative work to a minimum. Organizationally we had marched up the hill and down again. The uninterrupted continuity of the professional association of council executives proceeded as if nothing had happened at Rochester. The exceptionally competent and complete minutes (51 mimeographed pages) contain a full list of the committees for the previous year, and fifteen other reports.

On September 27, with eleven present, and again on October 25, the Committee on Extension discussed relationships, including those with the Federated Church Women. The October 1929 *FC Bulletin* in an editorial on "The Genius of Church Federation" said, "The federal movement represents the attempt of the Protestant bodies to achieve practical unity among the churches while at the same time fully maintaining the freedom and the diversity for the sake of which the denominations came into being." The final paragraph said, "Roughly speaking, the Church had unity at the expense of liberty for a thousand years

before the Protestant Reformation; and for four hundred years after the Reformation there was liberty at the expense of unity." Federation is an "effort to conserve both sets of values."

The 1929 "Review of the Year"⁴⁵ featured extension; the report on state and local federations⁴⁶ was signed by McCreary, Moore, and Guild. McCreary's recommendations were voted by the FC Executive Committee.⁴⁷ Extension expenses for 1929⁴⁸ totaled \$18,192.46, and there was an unexpended balance of \$1,481.08;⁴⁹ \$1,635 had been designated for the special lectures account.⁵⁰ The 1930 budget was set at \$16,000.⁵¹

Church Women Push Forward Again

The forces already at work in 1924 were further in evidence at a second Conference on Women's Organized Interdenominational Work, at Cleveland in 1926, and a third at St. Louis in 1927. By this time Mrs. E. Tallmadge Root of Massachusetts had published a 24-page pamphlet on "Local Federation (of Church Women) the Next Step."⁵²

After further discussion among the leaders of church women as to relations, both local and national, in New York City in December 1927, a nation-wide fourth conference of representatives of state and local Federated Church Women, at Buffalo in 1928, resulted in a National Commission of Church Women. This Commission existed only two years, but in 1929 at Boston a National Council of Federated Church Women was organized. (NCFCW or NCCW—"Federated" was dropped in 1928.) Announcement of this event to 1,300 local groups before ratification by the Federation of Women's Boards of Foreign Missions and the Council of Women for Home Missions, while unfortunately premature, was greeted with great enthusiasm. At the 1929 Boston meeting it was voted to ask for affiliation with the FC. No direct affiliation was ever granted, though the president of the NCCW was made a member of the FC Administrative Committee.

From 1936 to 1950 the Federal Council had its own helpful Women's Cooperating Commission, which in its closing years numbered nearly 100 members. Dr. Mary E. Wooley was the first chairman. In 1940 the vice chairman, Mrs. Henry Sloane Coffin, moved up to the chairmanship, which she held until 1947. Miss Anna E. Caldwell was the paid secretary until 1942.⁵³

Tough Times, Tough Thinking

By 1930 Handy noted a "theological drift to the left." That was the year that William P. Montague wrote: "Fear and sorrow are no

longer the major themes of our serious culture; . . . a new confidence in man's power to make life happy and secure by purely secular devices" was reported.⁵⁴ (The silent movies had found their voices of synchronized music and spoken word; and technicolor was just around the corner.) Yet paradoxically these were years of grievous insecurity for millions. "The depression, which began in the early twenties for the farmer, hung heavy over the entire country. . . . Not until 1935 did it begin to lift."⁵⁵

At the end of 1930 Dr. Root of Massachusetts retired; the December *FC Bulletin* honored him for his 26 years as the outstanding veteran of the movement. Said Dean Vaughn Dabney, of Andover-Newton, "In 1906 the annual income of the (Massachusetts) Federation was but \$552." A January 1931 appreciation of Dr. Root by Dr. Anthony occupied most of a *Bulletin* page. Dr. Root (and his wife) will be remembered for their famous slogan: "Keep the facts before the people till the people change the facts," which they borrowed from a State Federation⁵⁶ of Women's Clubs.

A 1930 headline, "Universal Life and Work Movement Develops Permanent Organization," marked a major foundation of the coming World Council of Churches. *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, the long-awaited Institute study by H. Paul Douglass, was published in 1930. Now little known, this determinative and significant volume proved to be a cause as well as a result. To some it represented chiefly "the paralysis of analysis"; to others it was the take-off for the beginnings of profounder ecumenical thinking. More than one secretary was deeply grateful for the way in which the Institute's field staff discovered even more about a local federation and its significance than those intimately at work in it had realized. Dr. Douglass was reporting as objectively as possible on the basis of empirical data. Some of us were forced to reach a larger measure of agreement with his conclusions, when we too became better acquainted with the facts. Dr. Douglass tried not to read his own ideas into the situation as he found it; he rather sought merely to "tease out" of it generalizations that he was sure were implicit "in the data" themselves.⁵⁷

This huge volume (xviii, 914 pp.) involved field work by three men over a period of thirty months, an average of six weeks to each of twenty federations, nineteen of which were urban. The Massachusetts State Federation was also studied intensively. (There were 43 city federations with paid leaders in 1929, half as many more having reverted to volunteer leadership or dropped out since 1920.) With an

adequate budget provided by the Institute, this study was able to trace the typical life-cycle of the surviving federations, which had by then begun to find themselves, and to examine their structure and program in considerable detail. Primarily factual, the report also interpreted the larger meanings of the church federation movement in terms both stimulating and provocative. Fifteen chapters in the "general" report were supplemented by nine others of a more "technical" nature. These latter covered the committee system, paid staff, three major program items, women's cooperation, finances and facilities, promotion and publicity. Sociologically the volume measured the social distance between religious groups and the response of constituents to federation programs, as well as the frequency of program items. Here then is both a monument of value to subsequent surveyors, and a methodology for the use of students seeking to compare the greatly expanded church cooperation of a generation later with the carefully documented situation in 1929.

By 1930 the extension staff were making excellent reports to the Extension Committee. For example, at the February 28 meeting Dr. Guild and Dr. Moore reported to the eleven persons present their activities in state work in Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin, and in numerous cities throughout the nation. Dr. Moore had shared in the pace-setting conference on "The Church in the Changing City," in Detroit, February 17 to 19.⁵⁸ By March Dr. Zahniser's reports, which had begun in December, had become a regular feature. A new directory of councils was⁵⁹ issued. An interesting analysis of state and local relationships showed conflicting emphases on mass meetings and on field organization.

"Forward on the State Front"

"The state council is today the most needed line of advance," the June 1930 *FC Bulletin* editorialized. For many years only four fully organized state councils of churches had existed—Massachusetts, Connecticut, California, and Ohio. "The budgets of city councils of churches now total more than \$750,000 a year." The significance of the action taken at Rochester is held to be that "The state is the necessary line of approach of the cooperative movement to the thousands of small communities."

While one able local executive thought "the chief business of a state council is to organize local communities," he added, "frankly, I do not know one single state secretary who is giving this more than a minor fraction of his time and interest." It was as easy for state

councils to become absorbed in other work as it was for the Federal Council, and the costs of field work were considerable. Dr. Cavert wrote, "We seek to organize state councils of churches in order to attain in state areas the same objectives for which the Federal Council is working nationally."

June 16 to 19, 1930, at the Windermere Hotel, Chicago, AES attendance was down, as a result of illness as well as financial stringency, but more than forty persons were present. Two joint sessions were held with the NCFCW. Don D. Tullis, then of Cleveland, was elected president. Receipts had amounted to \$1,173.54, leaving a balance of \$829.90, in accordance with a policy initiated by B. F. Lamb to build up a reserve. Dues were now as high as \$50 for the largest organizations.⁶⁰ The AES Executive Committee, with both Dr. Moore and Dr. Guild present, held a delightful meeting in Cleveland at the home of President Tullis, then local executive, on June 26. Committees on personnel, program, and promotion, as well as relations with the National Council of Federated Church Women, were named; and preliminary steps taken looking toward a well-organized study of the philosophy of the federated movement.

On December 2, 1930, Dr. Macfarland became secretary emeritus. Dr. Cavert soon proved abundantly able to succeed him. On September 26 the Committee on Extension, with sixteen members present, faced up to "present problems," including its financial inability to continue the *Council (Church Federation) News Letter*,⁶² a matter of committee study for a full year. Dr. Guild's report was one of realistic courage and never-say-die spirit.

On September 23 the Executive Committee of the AES, assembled in New York to consider religious education relationships and a progress report from the Philosophy Committee, was asked "for a clear definition of what is involved in evangelism." The five members of this Executive Committee met the next day, October 24, with ten members of the Extension Committee. Seven pages of valuable discussion material, covering five major questions, concluded with the query, "What are we on the Extension Committee to extend?" (That such a question was asked carries its own evidence of uncertainty.) Before adjournment Dr. Moore defined his relation to the federated movement as over against the trend toward church union, and his own interest in "Federal Unity," in a manner that foreshadowed events to come. On December 1 and 2 at the Hamilton Hotel, Washington, sixteen members of the AES were present. Committees reported and personnel problems were discussed.

In his 1930⁶³ report on state and local federation, Dr. Moore cited the Douglass report as "a formidable volume of 500 pages," which, by reason of its penetrating suggestions, merited widespread and earnest attention. Expenses for 1930 amounted to \$15,801.61;⁶⁴ the \$17,500 budget for 1931 included the expenses of the midwest office.⁶⁵

The *FC Bulletin* for April 1930 featured an article by W. R. King on "Home Missions Faces the Future" by means of the organization of state councils (of churches, or of home missions; or interdenominational comity commissions; or superintendents' councils), survey (state by state, county by county, community by community), and adjustment. This was leading up to the North American Home Missions Congress, December 1 to 5, 1930.⁶⁶

At the January 26, 1931, meeting of the Committee on Extension, with fourteen present, it was noted that as many as thirty-six letters had gone out from the Federal Council in 1930 to state and local councils—an average of three a month; six had been sent by the Commission on International Justice and Good Will. Dr. Moore's resignation, January 23, was then announced;⁶⁷ the FC Personnel Committee recommended its acceptance as of May 1, and the Administrative Committee followed this recommendation. A new list of councils then available included "volunteer" organizations. In April the Advisory Committee approved Don Tullis, AES president, for its membership.

A special feature characteristic of these years was the promotion of *State Ministers' Conferences*. The March 1930 *Bulletin* also featured "Ohio Churchmen and Christian Unity" as evidenced by the more than 3,500 people at the fourfold conference of pastors (1,261), laymen, women, and young people. The January 1931 *Bulletin* gave a schedule of 1931 statewide conferences, and the March issue had more than two pages about these developments, under the heading, "Statewide Convocations of Ministers Cultivate Spirit of Unity," in Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas, Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania. And in November "State-wide Convocations of Pastors Planned" listed Illinois, Maryland, Delaware, Ohio, Nebraska, and Massachusetts. On June 19, 1931, in Chicago a conference on state convocations of ministers was held, with twenty persons present. Eight 1932 convocations were listed, with dates, and six others were being proposed.

The ICRE Studies Its Field Supervision Responsibilities

Relationships are a two-way street. Smaller units related to larger units may be required to meet certain requirements, as a condition of

this relationship; by the same token, larger units have certain obligations and opportunities in connection with the smaller units related to them. In 1927 an ICRE Committee of Nine had made suggestions concerning accredited state councils. The 1928 *ICRE Year Book* (pp. 114, 115) included a "Basis for Accrediting State Councils of Religious Education as Auxiliaries of the ICRE." By July 1930 Dr. Magill was pointing out⁶⁸ that "state councils meeting certain conditions have been designated as accredited auxiliaries of the International Council." That this idea of accreditation also put certain obligations on the denominations, at the local level as well, was likewise pointed out by Fred H. Willkens of Rochester.⁶⁹ "The old-fashioned spirit of competition and rivalry is giving way to fruitful cooperation." "Local churches can do their best work only when they cooperate in the fullest extent in the common cause." "If the denominations do not look on the city director of religious education as their representative, then all our talk about . . . cooperative program is of no avail."

After preliminary consideration in September 1930, on November 14, 1930, the ICRE issued "A Guide to the Evaluation of State Councils of Religious Education" (8 pages).⁷⁰ In those days religious educators were chiefly concerned with methodology and organization—far less interested than now in theological considerations. Accordingly conditions were appraised for the most part in terms of certain "non-theological factors." Actual state situations were found to range "from the ideal to the unsatisfactory."

These developments were part of the forging of a new ICRE field policy. On September 12, 1930, Harry C. Munro, director of field work, in presenting "Proposed Objectives, Job Analysis, and Time Budget for 1930-1931," had made "the assumption that the ICRE staff will organize itself as a Board of Field Administration in dealing with all field policies, problems, and programs which bear primarily upon state or local councils; and the director of field work will be the executive secretary of that Board."

The proposed Board seems to have got promptly under way. In November it withdrew accreditation from two states where there had been decided changes since April. Elsewhere accreditation was continued until February 1932.

On February 4, 1931, in connection with the agenda for a February 14 Conference of State and ICRE Staff at the Stevens Hotel, it was felt that "more opportunity is needed by this council group for mutual acquaintance and fellowship, for the sharing of problems

and experiences, and for thinking through together solutions, policies, and principles which underlie the work for which as a group we are responsible." "As a basis for the day's program 25 state secretaries were requested to submit problems or topics. Nearly 100 suggestions came from the 15 who responded." Item V in a proposed manual for state councils outline was: "What is involved in accrediting state councils as Auxiliaries of the ICRE?"

In some states a closer integration of field forces seemed possible.⁷¹ A financial policy covering field services of the ICRE staff to state councils was considered. By February 26, 1931, field engagements of five ICRE staff members were studied with a view to more adequate clearance. Further consideration was given to information needed from state councils, to suggested scales, and to an expanded (7 page) draft of a proposed basis of accrediting.

In March, after considering a revised statement on the "Purpose of a Field Program," and "Principles Underlying Interdenominational Field Work in Religious Education," attention was given to "The Background for the Calling of a Conference on Closer Cooperation of Field Forces in Religious Education," and to a revised 32 page statement on "Relationships between Councils of Religious Education and Councils of Churches." The situation in two states (Illinois and Wisconsin) showed that the educational forces were by no means a monolithic structure, and that denominational leaders, if requested to cooperate on one important function, like religious education, were now seemingly eager to cooperate "across the board."

The staff "Board of Field Administration" had now evolved to a point where on April 30 and May 1, 1931, there could be held the first meeting of the ICRE Committee on Field Program, for the consideration of "A Guide to Field Supervision in Religious Education."

Rethinking Cooperation and Relationships

More than fifty persons were present at the AES annual meeting, June 20-22, 1931, at the Hotel Windermere, Chicago, to consider "Basic Principles in Church Cooperation and Their Expression in Federation Activities." The Philosophy Committee (Evans, chairman) was continued, and conference with the Federal Council's Committee on Function and Structure authorized. The Committee on Personnel reported on qualifications and needs of the secretariat, and a prolonged study was recommended. A committee on biography (Guild, Price, and Darby) had been at work gathering data, now on file at the Office

for Councils of Churches. Social service gained new visibility about this time. Linn A. Tripp of the Indianapolis staff gave a 6-page report on "Social Service Problems" to which the local church federations were now beginning to give departmental status.⁷² On the basis of a careful 5-page report (McAfee, chairman), the Association was in favor of thoroughly rethinking evangelism. 2,200 Women's Groups were reported.

Receipts for the year amounted to \$1,521.83, and the balance on hand was slightly increased to \$848.85. George L. Ford of Youngstown (later of Scranton, Pa.), was elected president. This writer presented a 6-page report on the relationships between councils of churches and councils of religious education, which affords interesting evidence of how events sometimes outrun the fondest expectations. Emerson O. Bradshaw of the Chicago Federation gave a careful 5-page report on "The Present Status of Week-Day Schools of Religion." AES findings included "the opinion of this body as to the essential need of geographical as well as denominational representation in the Federal Council," and astonishment at the "variety of technical problems we have been obliged to face." An AES resolution suggested the wisdom of another conference like the one held in Cleveland in 1920.

On July 9 the executive committee of the AES, meeting at the Hotel Commodore Perry, Toledo, decided to maintain as fully as possible the reserves established by the Lamb administration. In the fall, however, AES apportionments were reduced 50% for the year.

In October 1931 the FC Extension Committee elected to its membership George L. Ford, new AES president. On December 3 a textbook on *Principles and Methods of Church Federation Work*, suggested by the AES, was approved. Dr. Guild's removal to New York at the end of the year was authorized.

In spite of their irritation at what sometimes seemed excessive mail from the Federal Council, on December 2 and 3, in connection with a Philadelphia meeting of the Administrative Committee, fourteen members of the AES Executive Committee requested "the Federal Council to take steps to arrange for as many as possible of (its) major executives to make one visit each year to every state and local organization."

Extension Increasingly Central

The 1931 Federal Council Report on Extension of State and Local Cooperation,⁷³ signed by Dr. Guild, explained that while "the work of

organizing and maintaining councils and federations of churches is under the direction of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Council," it had in turn appointed the Advisory Committee on Extension of State and Local Cooperation. (This change from Commission to Advisory Committee may seem a distinction without a difference, but the intent was to integrate extension more closely into the Federal Council task.) This report cites the fifth objective of the Federal Council: "To assist in the organization of local branches . . . to promote its aims in their communities"; but it points out that state and local "councils are affiliated with, but not organically a part of, the Federal Council. The autonomy of each . . . is preserved." Thirty-four city councils of churches then employed executive secretaries; 16 others had part-time or office secretaries. There were six state councils with employed personnel. (This was honest and conservative reporting.) A printed list now contained the names of 49 councils, or more than the previous peak in 1922 and 1924, and six more than in 1929, the low point at which Dr. Guild returned. It was still slow going, and there would be only a small increase in numbers of local councils of churches for another decade, but the slump was over. The ground lost had been regained, precisely at the time when some were lamenting that the movement was stalled. The next push forward would be at the state level.

"On account of the present economic condition, effort has not been put forth to organize and finance new city and state councils during this year, save where volunteer leadership might assure the success of the work," as, for example, in Madison, Wis. Progress toward affiliation of state councils of religious education with federations and councils of churches, and the trend toward mergers, is noted and illustrated. Close alliance with the Home Missions Council occasions satisfaction,⁷⁴ and Dr. Zahniser's work is appreciatively featured. Committee expenses for the year were \$8,522.67. A budget allocation of \$16,200 had been made for extension and for the midwest office, which actually spent \$9,936.12. Extension receipts seem to have amounted to only \$1,784. Evidently the general treasury absorbed the⁷⁵ difference.

First Thoughts of National Merger

Late in 1931 Dr. Guild wrote,⁷⁶ "I had a long visit with Dr. Wm. R. King as he passed through Chicago last week. We talked still more over his scheme of forming a combination of the organizations engaged in interdenominational work, such as the Federal Council, the Home

Missions Council, the International Council of Religious Education, the Foreign Missions Conference, etc. In such a combination Dr. King feels that his great task would be to continue as he is, directing the home missionary part of the work. In view of the fact that such matters have been discussed ever since the Men and Religion Forward Movement, I am not very much in hopes of anything being done suddenly. Representatives of these organizations had a memorable conference at Silver Bay soon after the close of that movement. When it was over they were farther apart than ever before. In the meantime we must push the work for which we are responsible."

Further, a December, 1931 *FC Bulletin* article by W. R. King, "A Suggestion for Reorganization," asked, "Is it not time to begin thinking of some changes in form and structure and relationships of several other organizations" besides the Federal Council? He pointed out that the Federal Council federated only limited functions, and was little related to important denominational boards. There were other unrelated interdenominational organizations; why not relate the Federal Council, the Home and Foreign Missions Councils, the International Council of Religious Education, and the Church Boards of Education? "This may be impracticable," he admitted, "and visionary—but it is worth thinking about." (Is there any earlier statement along these lines? Within less than two decades the National Council was to put to shame the faint hearts of those days; and yet was to be itself the victim of the retention of function by the member denominations in a spirit of increasing insistence on denominational responsibility.)

There had now been more than two years of depression. In some ways the worst was yet to come; yet necessity might here too prove to be the mother of ecumenical invention. The frustrations of the period were soon to be marked by consolidations of forces, and renewed vigor. The 1931 annual report noted progress toward the affiliation of state councils of religious education and councils of churches, and the trend toward state mergers; already these had begun to take place in the cities. In 1932—not without opposition—would come the first state "merger." That event makes 1932 significant, and determines the chapter division of this history at this point. In spite of vague thinking and economic blocks a ferment was at work, uniting all cooperative minds and hearts; and the results in ecumenical organizations were to appear shortly in a great new push forward, whether the radius of organized church cooperation was short or long. The baffling twenties were passed. The decade now begun constituted the *merging* thirties.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter VI

- ¹ Minutes of a March 17, 1925, meeting of the Joint Committee on the Future of the Commission on Councils of Churches, appointed by the Administrative Committee of the FC and the Commission. (On March 11, as luncheon guests of Fred B. Smith at the Waldorf, the Committee of Direction had discussed at length the revision and modification of the work of the Commission.)
- ² *FC 1925 Report*, p. 17. For the Commission Report, signed by Smith and Holmes, see pp. 64ff.
- ³ *Ibid.*, pp. 217, 200, 222.
- ⁴ *1925 Commission Report*. A full page in the July-August, 1925 *FC Bulletin* was devoted to this meeting. The March-April issue gave more than three pages to E. T. Root's prize-winning essay on "Church Federation a Necessity."
- ⁵ For personnel changes, see *FC 1925 Report*, p. 65.
- ⁶ *Cf. FC 1926 Report*, p. 109; also *FC Bulletin* January-February, 1926. On December 29, 1925, the Special Committee had agreed that a requested conference with secretaries of local councils be held on January 8, 1926.
- ⁷ *FC 1926 Report*, p. 113.
- ⁸ Recorded in full in the minutes of the Administrative Committee for July 9, 1926. *Cf. FC 1926 Report*, pp. 126, 127.
- ⁹ *Cf. FC 1926 Report*, p. 127; and Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, pp. 206, 226.
- ¹⁰ *Cf. FC Bulletin*, November-December, 1926.
- ¹¹ *FC 1926 Report*, p. 144.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 159 ff.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 172, 173.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 174.
- ¹⁵ General Letter, March 24, 1927.
- ¹⁶ Art. on "Field Organization in Religious Education," in *International Journal*, March 1927, p. 33.
- ¹⁷ *International Journal*, February, 1925, p. 56.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, September, 1925, pp. 10, 11.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, January, 1926, p. 6.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, April, 1926, pp. 9-11.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, June, 1926, pp. 68, 69.
- ²² *Ibid.*, February, 1927, "Relationships in Interdenominational Cooperation."
- ²³ *FC Bulletin*, April, 1927, "Cooperation and Beyond."
- ²⁴ *FC 1927 Report*, pp. 8, 9.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 115.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127 f.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 141.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 148.
- ²⁹ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 116.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.
- ³² See *FC Bulletin*, December, 1927; also January, 1928 (more than a full page of interpretation); and February, 1928 (2½ pp. of findings, including "education for cooperation.")
- ³³ See *FC Bulletin*, May, 1928.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, ½ p. announcement of this AES meeting; June issue, full-page report.

- 35 *FC 1928 Report*, pp. 38 ff.
- 36 This report also appeared as a 2-page article by Dr. Moore in the December, 1928, *FC Bulletin*.
- 37 Cf. the March, 1929, *News Letter*.
- 38 *FC 1928 Report*, p. 279.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 287.
- 40 Handy, *op. cit.* p. 119.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 130: The years 1928 to 1934 were for the HMC also a period of "over-all decline . . . of stabilization and retrenchment as the home mission slowed."
- 42 See memo by Cavert and McCreary, February 21, 1929.
- 43 *FC Bulletin*, June and September, 1929.
- 44 This statement appears as a first item in a memo dated May 15, received by the Administrative Committee on May 24. While referred for study, it appears to have been promptly implemented, in fashion parallel to similar arrangements with the Home Missions Council. (*FC 1929 Report*, pp. 134, 135.)
- 45 *FC 1929 Report*, pp. 14, 15.
- 46 *Ibid.*, pp. 20-23.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 121 ff.
- 48 *Ibid.*, p. 190.
- 49 *Ibid.*, p. 195.
- 50 *Ibid.*, p. 188.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 197.
- 52 Pilgrim Press, 1920.
- 53 See *FC Reports*, 1937-1950, each of which includes this Commission's report and a listing of its officers.
- 54 Cf. Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 131.
- 55 Rich, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
- 56 *FC Bulletin*, October, 1930.
- 57 Cf. this writer's 16-page "Study Manual," based on the Douglass Report, published by the AES in 1930.
- 58 Cf. the *FC Bulletin*, February, 1930; and April, 1930 ("The Churches Look at the City.")
- 59 The *FC Bulletin*, March, 1930, in announcing "Michigan Institutes Council of Churches," noted: "No provision has been made as yet for funds to provide paid leadership." In the June 1931 issue: "Iowa Leaders Plan State Council of Churches."
- 60 See the June 1930 *News Letter*, and the full page article in the September 1930 *FC Bulletin*.
- 61 His address in this connection, *FC 1930 Report*, p. 142, is a mine of historical and biographical material; see also the January 1931 *FC Bulletin*, "Dr. Macfarland Completes Unique Service in Church Co-operation," by Dr. Cavert (2-pages).
- 62 In those depression years it did not seem to occur to any of us in the state and local councils that we might offer to pay for as welcome a bulletin service.
- 63 *FC 1930 Report*, pp. 18, 19.
- 64 *Ibid.*, p. 163.
- 65 *Ibid.*, p. 168.
- 66 See the *FC Bulletin*, September, and November, 1930; and January, 1931, an editorial on "A New Level in Home Missions Planning," and a 2-page article, "Home Missions Congress Prepares for a New Epoch"; followed in April by 2 pages of the Congress "Message."

- ⁶⁷ See the *FC Bulletin*, February, 1931.
- ⁶⁸ *International Journal*, July, 1930—"Some Achievements of the Past Quadrennium."
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, "The Function of the City Council of Religious Education."
- ⁷⁰ See the ICRE Board of Field Administration file in the Office for Councils of Churches.
- ⁷¹ *Cf.* ICRE action taken February 17, 18, 1931.
- ⁷² *Cf.* *FC Bulletin*, October, 1930, art. on Indianapolis, by Tripp.
- ⁷³ *FC 1931 Report*, pp. 16-19.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 134.
- ⁷⁶ In a personal letter to Dr. McCreary, October 5, 1931.

The Merging Thirties

When Money Was Scarce

The depression that began in late 1929 was at its worst in the early thirties. National bodies were as hard hit as local, perhaps even harder; church organizations were as much hampered as secular, perhaps even more so. In 1932 the AES interrupted its series of annual meetings for the only time in its history, omitting a session already scheduled for Detroit in June. "All our councils and federations are having financial difficulties which would greatly limit the attendance."¹ By March it was clear that the AES ought to concentrate on getting state and local executives to attend the Indianapolis FC Quadrennial in December. June 28 Dr. Guild wrote to the field, "If you are having difficulties in the financing of your work . . . we are all in a large and splendid company . . . (splendid because) the secretaries are courageously meeting the issues that are at hand." September 23, 1932, Dr. Guild reiterated to Dr. Cavert, "The whole federation movement is in a very serious condition." Extension cost the Federal Council only \$9,851.36 in 1932,² and the Field Department budget for 1933 was fixed at \$10,000—obviously a depression figure.³

In the autumn Dr. Guild said again, "The first nine months of this year have tested the councils of churches severely. (But) of the 50 councils with employed leadership, only two have temporarily given up that policy."⁴ Yet 1932 saw the publication of three significant volumes: Zahniser's *Interchurch Community Programs*,⁵ Hartshorne and Miller's *Community Organization in Religious Education*,⁶ and *Rethinking Missions* (the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry).⁷

From 1933, when in many ways the depression was deepest, to 1937 there was drought on the Great Plains;⁸ the cities also in the middle thirties saw rough days. But in 1933 it was said that "only three (council of churches) secretaries have resigned with the knowledge that a full-time successor would not be employed." "Other secretaries have wondered how they would carry on, but while wondering, have carried on just the same."⁹ This was the first year of "The New Deal."

At the AES in Chicago in 1933 Detroit reported its church and council finances at the bottom; and the same was true elsewhere. Debts had increased 30%; eleven cities reported debts from \$1,000 to \$17,500; Rochester, surprisingly, none. The 1933 budgets of 18 cities were 33% below the 1932 figures; one old federation had to cut 66%. Staffs were reduced by 30%; salaries, 40%. In one case back salaries were 49% of the budget.¹⁰ The AES had only \$185 in available funds—the rest of its considerable bank balance was “frozen.” The previous year’s receipts had been about half the former peak. A new level of askings was set at only a third of the previous high figure, the treasurer suggesting a minimum payment of \$10, with \$25 for the larger six councils.

And Merger Was Epidemic

From 1932 to 1940 there was rapid consolidation of councils of religious education and councils of churches into a single nation-wide network of state and local cooperation. This trend had been under way *locally* for years. In 1918 Myron C. Settle of Kansas City’s Sunday School Association had also become secretary of its council of churches;¹¹ a plan adopted late in 1924 for the merging of the two councils became effective in 1925, with mingled regrets and satisfaction. In 1920, the Wichita executive served not only the Federation of Churches but also the County Sunday School Association; he could soon report, “There is not one Sunday school office and another weekday office and another Council office. We are to all intents and purposes one organization.”¹² Likewise by 1922 the Wayne County Sunday School Association had become the Department of Religious Education in the Sunday schools for the Detroit Council of Churches, the two bodies having their offices together.¹³

On September 20, 1923, the Cleveland Federated Churches and the Cuyahoga County Sunday School Association united to form what soon became known as the Federated Churches of Greater Cleveland, of which the Sunday School Association now became the Department of Religious Education. This was accomplished before the arrival of J. Quinter Miller as the first religious education secretary, and appears to have been the earliest complete local merger, as distinguished from joint employment of the same staff. Naturally Dr. Miller, having seen it accomplished locally, later reasoned, Why not at the state level also? Chicago’s Sunday School Association and Church Federation forces were merged in 1924; and that same year the quiescent Monroe County Sunday School Association became active again with a modest budget and joined with the Rochester Federation of Churches in employing a

director of religious education for the county. After several years of "closest affiliation," the two bodies effected a complete merger in October, 1927, when Rev. Fred H. Willkens began his service as religious education director. In 1925 the Council of Religious Education in Portland, Ore., became the Department of Religious Education in the Council of Churches, both organizations continuing as autonomous bodies, but with one budget, and one executive.¹⁴ By 1926 the Federation of Churches in Youngstown and the Mahoning County Sunday School Association had established "an intimate form of cooperation . . . without destroying the identity of the Sunday School Association."¹⁵ In 1926 an International Standard Training School for Church Workers in Omaha was sponsored by denominations cooperating both in the Omaha Council of Churches and in the Douglas County Council of Religious Education. Five years later the two councils were merged. On April 1, 1930, the Erie County Sunday School Association and the Buffalo Council of Churches were happily merged.¹⁶

In June 1931 an AES paper on "Religious Education and Protestant Cooperation" was able to say:¹⁷

"By and large, the *merger* of local councils of religious education with federations of churches is a fact accomplished. There are exceptions. They must be recognized. Exceptional situations may continue for a long time. Let us be very patient.

"On the state level, it is the merger that is exceptional. The state councils of religious education are better entrenched than the few state federations of churches. Mergers will come slowly. Within a decade (or two at most) the story will be different: Eventually the independent councils of religious education on the state level will be exceptional. By that time we shall begin to talk seriously about national unification."

(Perhaps the most interesting fact about that paper is its date. In less than two decades the National Council was to be a going concern; and as early as 1951, seemingly only Pennsylvania had a separate council of religious education.)

The Brooklyn, N.Y., merger was effected in 1932; Baltimore, Md., united its councils in 1937; Cincinnati followed in 1938. The necessary economies of the depression years perhaps helped to merge local councils of religious education and federations of churches, as, for example, in Duluth, where layman W. L. Smithies had now served two decades, the first five years as president of the federation, and fifteen as executive of the now merged organizations.¹⁸

"Connecticut Leads on a New Path"

In 1932 the first complete merger at the *state* level was happily accomplished. January 1, 1931, Rev. J. Quinter Miller had become secretary both of Connecticut's Council of Religious Education and of its Federation of Churches. "On June 1 the headquarters of the two organizations were united, . . . the office secretariat of both continuing to carry on their functions. Mr. Miller is now engaged in studying the work of both organizations, with a view to submitting plans for the complete co-ordination of their activities."¹⁹ Connecticut's "epoch-making union" took place at the annual meetings in December 1932, "the first of its kind in the United States"—"the most advanced step taken in any state unifying the Protestant Cooperative forces"—"the realization of the ideal that there should be one organization to carry out the whole program of the whole Church for the whole state."²⁰ Something new had happened in Connecticut, and it appeared to be catching. Down the years it has become increasingly clear that this was the contagion of health.

Other States Follow

In the spring of 1933 Illinois was voting on its merger. Massachusetts had also been working on its consolidation problems, and in November 1933 its merger was consummated. New York State's merger also was now all but completed, with Dr. W. G. Landes, of the State Council of Religious Education, slated to be the new executive.²¹ The endowment funds held by his organization added greatly to the solidity of the combination of two organizations that were both "going concerns." As in local situations, state mergers were consummated only after years of negotiation, sometimes patient, sometimes less adroit.

For clarity's sake, the state merger process may now be previewed to the end of the decade by listing the years in which inclusive state councils were created by merger or expansion, or *de novo*:

1932 Connecticut	1936 No. California
	So. California
1933 Massachusetts	Michigan
	North Carolina
1934 Illinois*	Oregon
Nebraska*	Vermont
1935 New York	Wisconsin
Washington-No. Idaho	

1937 Maryland-Delaware Rhode Island (revival)	1940 Ohio*
1938 Maine Missouri Montana West Virginia	

* In several cases the process involved two or more stages, and dates a year or two later are sometimes cited.

These 20 councils involved churches in 22 or more states. By 1940 there were eight additional state councils of churches (some of them without a paid executive): Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota, all of them parallel with councils of religious education.

Sample Merger Situations

"A pastors' convocation was held, under the auspices of the *Nebraska* Council of Christian Education, in Lincoln, January 19-21, 1931. More than 200 pastors from all parts of the state attended."²² Said John C. White, CCE executive, two years later,²³ "What we are doing . . . is asking the denominations who now own and direct the Nebraska Council (of Christian Education) to make it a Council of Churches and Christian Education." At the Third Annual Convocation it was voted to do just this. This expansion of the CCE was thus a patient result of three years of ministerial state-wide interdenominational fraternization. In presenting a constitution it was said, "The enlarged Council does not contemplate an expanded staff." (When one agency absorbed another, or expanded to perform its functions, there was always the question as to whether the added tasks could be adequately done.) Secretary White concluded an article on "Expanding the Field of Cooperation in Nebraska" with the assertion: "The Council of Churches and Christian Education will be the creation of the Protestant bodies of the state."²⁴ The new inclusive council (NCC&RE) was organized January 15, 1934.²⁵

In 1934 *Massachusetts* and *Boston* were integrating their councils, an arrangement that persisted for more than two decades. In 1937 three organizations in *Maryland-Delaware* and *Baltimore*, which had one staff and only meager financial resources, found it expedient to consolidate their forces. (*Per contra*, in 1958 it seemed clear that *Seattle* might better have its own council, separate from that of Washington-Northern Idaho, a 1935 merger.)²⁶

Merger details, including tensions, infelicities, personalities, variations from state to state, etc., would be worthy of a doctoral dissertation; and are instructive in terms of what not to do, and how not to do what ought to be done, as well as in terms of successful unions finally achieved.

In 1940 the *ICRE Journal* traced the merger process in *Ohio* in successive issues: In February the state was "considering merger," "after several years of discussion and conference." In May the merger plan had been approved, with details to be worked out; in June it had been ratified, and the date for making it effective was to be set. In November the completion of the merger in September was reported. Ohio, with relatively strong councils, was late in merging; *Pennsylvania*, which has not yet effected a merger, and may never do so, had more than 3,200 paid registrations at its 1934 Sunday school convention.²⁸ In some instances, state as well as local, bankruptcy and lack of leadership, both in church federations and in councils of religious education, accelerated the merger process.

For example, in *Illinois*, after the debacle of 1929, not only the "new Council of Churches organized in the days of prosperity" but also "by 1930 the Council of Religious Education was suffering from undernourishment. One by one the staff was decreased and cheaper quarters had to be sought." Most of 102 counties had formerly been organized; only 75 were now. "With our new conditions of rapid transportation and improved roads the county unit does not seem to be always the best plan"—so it seemed to Dr. Walter R. Cremeans, a Springfield pastor.²⁹ But by 1940 the Illinois merged Council was having exhibits in its own church house.³⁰

In 1933 the *Oklahoma* Council of Churches and the Council of Christian Education held a joint meeting (it would be 1942 before they could merge); and the New York Council of Religious Education and the Council of Churches had their first joint state convention.³¹ They would merge in 1934.)

In 1935 *North Carolina* held its first convention in five years, with 500 registered and 700 attending. Thirteen denominations were looking forward to more effective cooperation. Harry C. Munro of the ICRE and H. Shelton Smith (since 1931 of the Duke University faculty) collaborated in the leadership.³² After a 1934 conference of leaders, *Wisconsin* held an organization meeting to plan its inclusive council in January 1935.³³ (This too became effective in 1936.)

In July 1935 a convention of the *Kansas Council of Religious Education* was articulated with the sessions of the state Council of Churches. The latter (though organized in 1922) was just getting under way; the former had preregistered 4,000 delegates.³⁴ By the fall of 1935 *North Dakota* was out of debt, had a comfortable cash balance, and was ready to move forward; but it seemingly did not achieve an inclusive council, with paid executive, until 1949.³⁵ *Oregon* its Council of Churches organized in 1935, joined its forces in 1936. (Its Sunday School Association beginnings dated back to 1870, 1872, and 1885.)

On October 31, 1938, the *Maine Council*, which had voted in 1934 to seek a general secretary, became inclusive.³⁶

Other Glimpses of the Field

In May 1932 the IJRE editorialized on the need for both denominational and interdenominational field workers, and how to relate them. Dr. Munro wrote on "Unifying the Field Forces," with comments on the situation in seven states; and C. A. Hauser reported "Some Experiments in Cooperation in Pennsylvania." A leap year analysis of the situation in many states added to the significance of this issue of the *Journal*.

During these years there was repeated emphasis on evangelism and on the local community. J. Quinter Miller wrote on "The City Organization and Program of Cooperative Religious Education" after four years of experience as director of religious education with the Federated Churches of Greater Cleveland.³⁷ Visitation evangelism, an early phase of Sunday school work, now re-emerges as "Reaching the Unreached."³⁸ An article by Minor Miller on "Religious Education in the Community" proved of sufficient importance to warrant reprinting after three years.³⁹ One by Charles E. Shike of Illinois, "A State Council in Action,"⁴⁰ contained maps showing population change by counties, index of levels of living, and percentage of the population in church membership. P. R. Hayward's three annual meeting addresses on "Changes in the Population of America—What They Mean for Christian Education" were publicized.⁴¹ Frank M. McKibben wrote on "Next Steps in Community Coordination."⁴² Successive issues of the *Journal* during this period afford interesting evidence of rapid shifts in professional leadership.⁴³

By April 1940 the Intercouncil Field Department found that councils of churches were being proposed in *Montana* (had 1938 beginnings proved abortive, or were they only in the field of home missions?) and *Wyoming* (but without permanent success until 1958);

that closer correlation in *Indiana* was being discussed (its merger to become effective in 1944), and that correlation had been accomplished in *Minnesota* (but with no merger until 1947). *Iowa* agencies were getting acquainted (and would merge in 1945). Since 1938 the *Missouri* CRE was "continuing to become" a Council of Churches. Expansion was also being considered by the CRE in *Virginia*, *New Jersey*, and *Oklahoma*; (and effected in 1945, 1947, and 1942 respectively). The *Maine* situation was now in doubt, by reason of a resignation. In *Washington, D.C.*, W. L. Darby had resigned after eighteen years, and coordination seemed worth considering. Dr. Miller had met with representatives of both *Kansas* agencies as to their relationships, but it would be several years before a merger could be effected. The *Colorado* situation was complicated; it would be another decade before a merger could be accomplished. In *Kentucky* the CRE and the HMC had conferred, but there was no executive; merger would be accomplished in 1948.

Greater Inter-Council Field Cooperation

In all this integrating process, three levels were involved: city or county, state, and nation. There were many problems, and real causes for hesitation, each of them matched by the impatience of those who did not understand all that was involved. At the national level negotiations proceeded steadily, if sometimes jerkily. Developments in the field had accelerated events at the "summit."

As early as July 1926 the Federal Council had appointed a committee on relations with the ICRE. A two year inter-council agreement (subject to ratification) made in 1929 recommended no particular form of relationship between organizations in states and local communities.²³ All the national interdenominational agencies now moved toward larger field cooperation with one another.

The religious educators had a concrete, established functional program, and a considerable field structure and personnel. As one able student of the movement put it, the problem involved in merger tensions "is not merely a question of misunderstanding. It is more one of *our own people* (i.e., the church federation group) having narrow, distorted ideas of function. I am convinced that more federations have died because they never found worthwhile jobs, than for any other reason. I am concerned because so commonly the churches are turning over to the Councils only the fringes, only the nick-nacks of their work. Things they consider vital they carefully held back. In comity we are getting into vital things, but where else?"²⁴

Federal Council Establishes a Field Department (FCFD)

In the fall of 1932 the Federal Council expanded its Extension Committee into a representative Field Department, including persons denominationally chosen to the Executive Committee of the FC, others nominated by the AES, and representatives of the Home Missions Councils and other interdenominational agencies willing to cooperate in working out the most effective cooperative programs in state and local areas.

At the end of 1932 the FC had to confess, "The past quadrennium has been a very difficult one in which to carry out the proposal that extension of state and local cooperation be made a major task. . . . Special attention has been given to the extension of *state* cooperation . . . Most of the cities in which councils might be organized and adequately financed were already organized."⁴⁶ The state council was increasingly regarded as the key to the growth of local work.

"Primary attention" to organizing state and local federation was again voted in 1932, and the Field Department personnel was listed as the first of eight departments. It was further voted, "In order to make certain that the experience and the point of view of the local church and community shall be taken into full consideration in the development of all Cooperative programs, the membership of all the Federal Council's departments shall include representatives of city and state councils of churches."⁴⁷

This sincere, generous, permissive action proved less worldshaking than it seemed; and the proof of the pudding, as always, was in the subsequent eating. Here too were both the seeds of progress in national-local relationships, and the beginnings of distinctions between corporate controls and program cooperation; yet it seemed to some that the chief structural problem was dodged. The effect in 1950 will become apparent.

The International Council Faces the Field

The year 1932 was also marked by the emergence of a new emphasis on field work on the part of the ICRE. The new national set-up, which had for a decade so largely absorbed the energies of denominational educational leaders, was by this time taken for granted. Renewed attention could now be given both to the state auxiliaries and to community aspects of religious education. In 1930 Harry C. Munro had been made Director of Adult Work and Field Administration.⁴⁸

In February 1932 the Committee on Field Program made a significant report to the Educational Commission on "The Purpose and Principles of Field Supervision."

Dr. Hugh S. Magill of the ICRE had at first been critical of local mergers, and in 1929 he was still sharply opposed to state consolidations; but he now said, "I agree . . . that the Connecticut Council of Churches and Religious Education is the type of organization best suited to present-day needs and present overlapping and duplication."⁴⁹

On February 13, 1933, the National and International Executives of the ICRE, in spite of grave misgivings on the part of several persons, agreed to experiment, in one or two states, as proposed by the HMC, and adopted a resolution indicating conditions under which they would favor state organizational unification. Mr. Russell Colgate and Dr. Harold McAfee Robinson, acting general secretary, were now convinced that the general merger principle required action.

On March 23, 1933, the new Field Department of the Federal Council, at its gratifyingly large first meeting, on hearing of the February action of the ICRE, found itself in hearty accord with its spirit and purpose, and on its recommendation the Executive Committee of the Federal Council the next day approved it with enthusiasm. Dr. King of course promised the equally hearty cooperation of the HMC.⁵⁰

The new AES President was Irvin E. Deer, executive secretary at Kansas City, Mo., who had been elected in December. He assured the Federal Council that "the (state and local) secretaries will be very happy to be used at any time by the Field Department in its extension work or to send representatives of their councils to places where help is needed." Progress on a new manual of organization and program methods, in process since June, 1932, was indicated.

At the June 1933 Chicago meeting of the AES only 23 secretaries were able to assemble; eight others sent regrets. "Good and Bad" aspects of fourteen local council situations were reported, and various aspects of church cooperation reviewed. The findings were important: "In our judgment a primary function of the Field Department should be the articulation of the various departments of the (Federal) Council, especially where these represent denominational emphases, with the programs of local and state councils established and to be established." Study of field services available, on a cooperative basis, was urged; and close cooperation between the Field Department and the AES Executive Committee. Very great satisfaction

was expressed for the presence of Dr. Harry C. Munro of the International Council. "We urge cities and states to move with such deliberation that whenever mergers are desirable there shall be the largest possible conservation of historic values and traditional loyalties." Dr. Deer was continued as president.

At the September 21, 1933, meeting of the Field Department of the Federal Council the manuscript and editorial process of the forthcoming little booklet "Community Programs for Cooperating Churches" were presented. Dr. Ralph C. McAfee of Detroit made a careful report of AES actions, remarking that "this movement is far behind where most of us thought it was going to be."

The next day (September 22, 1933), the Executive Committee of the Federal Council, having heard with appreciation the proposal of the AES for a Study of the Federal Council's field service, and of other interdenominational agency service in relation to the programs of state and local councils of churches, as presented by Dr. McAfee, requested the Federal Council's Field Department to undertake such a study, and also "to make recommendations after study and inquiry, as to ways in which the national and regional leaders and agencies of the denominations can use their influence more effectively in behalf of cooperative programs in states and local communities."⁵¹ Foreign Mission leaders were also now turning to the local and state councils with new interest, especially for statewide conferences; and the local councils were expressing appreciation for the stimulation of local church interest by denominational leaders.

In 1933 the ICRE took the important action that "in order to be a constituent member a state or provincial council (of religious education) shall be duly accredited as an auxiliary of the International Council, having its educational policies and field programs determined by an educational committee representing the cooperating denominations within its area."⁵² (28 accredited councils, 7 not, had employed secretaries).

At the end of 1933, there were still only eight state councils of churches with employed secretaries. "The one hope of developing continuous cooperation in cities of less than one hundred thousand population, and in counties and smaller communities, is to have in the state an executive secretary who can organize and help maintain these councils which must depend largely on volunteer leadership. Such a secretary can make effective the cooperation of state denominational officials. He can organize and aid city and county councils as well as direct the cooperative church work."⁵³

Inter-Agency Conference

On November 16, 1933, an informal meeting of the executives of certain national interdenominational organizations was held at the Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City, on invitation of Mr. Russell Colgate, president of the International Convention of the ICRE, who was made chairman, with Dr. Cavert as secretary. There was "general approval of the suggestion that there be some more adequate means of conference through which the national interdenominational organizations may consider ways and means of developing a more closely coordinated program for the total task of Christianity." This cautious rather than radical language was to have far-reaching results for all of American Protestantism.

At Dr. Cavert's proposal it was⁵⁴ soon arranged to make the ICRC offices the Chicago headquarters of the FC after January 1, 1934. It was now⁵⁵ recognized not only that "in several states substantial progress in the unification of the Protestant forces is already under way through the union of councils of churches, councils of religious education, and home missions councils," but also that "foreign missions and the Christian colleges ought to be included;" "that the real unit for all our work is the local church, and that we need to guard against disintegrating its support because of competing appeals."

The 1933 *FC Report* included "Twenty-Five Years of Church Federation." Dr. Cavert was now the only general secretary. Associate general secretary Guild was executive of the Field Department, with a 1934 budget of only \$9,000.⁵⁶ Receipts designated for extension in 1933 had amounted to only \$130.34; Field Department expense was \$9,273.95.

In 1934 church leaders, beginning to recover a bit from the depression spirit, started to talk about various types of "Advance." In January the Home Missions Councils adopted plans for "The New Co-operative Home Mission Advance." "It had been hoped to have major conferences in each state, followed by a series of smaller conferences; but for a number of reasons—chiefly the inability of the boards to supply needed funds or to loan the necessary staff—this whole side of the new advance never developed."⁵⁷

The Christian Youth Council of North America, which had met in Birmingham in 1926, and Toronto in 1930, now gathered again in 1934 at Conference Point. Its slogan, "Christian Youth Building a New World," reflected the recovery of optimism.⁵⁸ Later in the year United Church Adult Conferences were scheduled.⁵⁹

Organization of the Employed Council Officers' Association (ECOA)

The ICRE Committee on Field Program now began a period of vigorous functioning under the chairmanship of Dr. M. N. English; and what makes 1934 most significant for this narrative is the stirring among directors of state councils of religious education. Beginning with 1892, the Field Workers' Department of the International Association had proved of great significance; and out of the 1912 meeting of general secretaries, held under its auspices in New Orleans, had grown the Employed Officers' Association, formally "organized at Conference Point in the summer of 1916." "This organization continued until 1922, when it was disbanded because the continuance of it was considered 'contrary to the spirit of the merger' formed in 1922 uniting the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations and the International Sunday School Association into the International Council of Religious Education."

A fellowship that had flourished for thirty years (1892-1922) had been strangely allowed to evaporate; and many of the old-timers felt that something important was now missing, something more than the Fellowship of Christian Workers promoted late in 1933.⁶⁰ Accordingly, in July 1934, a year when the AES was not to meet until December, "a group of seven men (representing the former Sunday School Association heritage) met on the Tipi-Wakan porch at Conference Point Camp (on Lake Geneva, Wis.). Out of this informal discussion the Employed Council Officers' Association (ECOA) came into existence. In effect this professional fellowship continued the traditions of the old E.O.A."⁶¹

At the first full ECOA session, July 17 to 21, 1934, fifteen state and seven ICRE staff persons were present; and six visitors. Its convener, Harry C. Munro, executive secretary of the Committee on Field Programs of the ICRE, was made permanent ECOA executive. Hayden L. Stright of Minnesota was elected president; Otto Mayer of the ICRE staff secretary. A full-time field director for the ICRE was favored, and increased services to the state councils of religious education in financing their programs. It was suggested that state financial reports, already given to the ICRE Committee on Constituent Membership, might also be circulated confidentially among all other reporting councils.

It was recognized that religious education faced intradenominational tensions between specialized workers and ecclesiastical administrators as well as interdenominational problems of the same sort;

and the cooperation and understanding shown by some ecclesiasts was recognized with grateful appreciation. Merger situations proved of very great interest. The secretary was asked to find out what was happening in merged cities. An assessment of 25¢ per member for the year 1934-5 yielded \$12.75 from 51 persons.

The state religious education council secretaries, somewhat lost in the shuffle, had been hungry for closer fellowship and responsible cooperative status. They had been caught between denominational processes, in which their advisors shared fully and intimately, and the emerging ecclesiastical cooperation, which was often educationally amateurish, inexpert, unappreciative or even scornful of technical religious education. On the other hand, the dominance of state religious education secretaries in the ECOA now seems conspicuous, in contrast with the primarily urban leadership in the AES.

Since 1915 the AES had been able to maintain a small but increasing and uninterrupted fellowship; but the AES and the old EOA had never had any dealings with one another. In the 1930's the ecclesiastical climate was changing; the ecumenical spirit was beginning to thaw former icy walls of program partition, and iron curtains of functional separation were beginning to wear thin. Yet when it became probable that state religious education executives would be meeting at Lake Geneva in July, and Dr. Guild asked the AES men whether they would like to join in some of these sessions, he found that the time was not quite ripe. National leadership was now two steps ahead of state and local.

But, now that Connecticut had had a full year's experience with an inclusive council, and other states had experimented with various forms of cooperation between church federations and councils of religious education, and the field staff leaders of three national councils were achieving a new unity, the contagion of unified action began to spread. On January 12, 1934, seven national interdenominational executives conferred informally.

On February 17, 1934, on recommendation of its Executives' Advisory Section, the International Council took significant action toward closer integration of interdenominational agencies in the states. Over the next two years, however, a word of caution was repeatedly urged, lest by the neglect of strongly organized county units, or the provision of inadequate state budgets for religious education, councils of religious education find themselves "submerged" rather than parts of effective state mergers.⁶²

In March President Deer of the AES and Dr. Guild announced the proposed publication of a free quarterly AES news bulletin, subject to the approval of the Federal Council Finance Committee, and asked for news and orders. Meanwhile the Department of Field Administration of the ICRE had begun a mimeographed quarterly, *The Field Counselor*, with emphasis on itineraries of field personnel.

Secretaries Munro, King, and Guild, who had met together on successive days and agreed on quarterly meetings, were now formally appointed as an Intercouncil Staff Committee on Cooperation in the Field, and each of the three men was to be a cooperating member of the field planning and program building body of the other two councils. Seven Councils (FC, ICRE, HMC, CWHM, Ch. Bds. of Ed., MEM, FMC) now agreed not only to exchange information as to field itineraries but to make a united field approach.

On April 26, 1934, at the Parkside Hotel, New York (luncheon 70¢, with free use of tenth floor solarium!), Dr. Cavert told the Federal Council's Field Department, "The proposed plan for closer cooperation of field forces and programs of the interdenominational organizations represent one of the most significant advances made in recent years in the whole cooperative movement." The Federal Council had now agreed to finance the *News Bulletin* up to \$200 for one year. (*Church Federation Field* survived until the autumn of 1935). A 1935 Department budget of \$9,300 was approved, toward which it raised \$1,730.

In January 1935 48 city councils or federations of churches, with headquarters and one or more employed officers, with budgets ranging from \$1,500 to \$50,000, were reported, with many more depending on volunteer leadership. There were now eight state councils of churches with employed personnel and seven with volunteer.

At the end of 1934 the FC was told, "The most important factor in developing cooperation is the forces out in the field, constituting the AES. No group of Christian workers has been more severely tested by the depression. In spite of decreased income they have carried on and kept with them most of their assistants. The total indebtedness incurred by these councils is now less than at any time in the last three years, and larger budgets are being raised than last year. Only two cities closed their offices during the depression. The work of the city and state executives is the heart of the Field Department. The integration of the services of the city and state councils and of the Federal Council must be given more consideration than ever before. One of the serious losses resulting from the depression has been the necessary reduction in the amount of travel."⁶³

“By far the larger part of the country is still unorganized.”⁶⁴ The need for more field staff was reiterated; but lack of funds again prevented its employment. Church cooperation was now old enough to make the “Necrology” report increasingly significant.

In January 1935 Walter R. Mee, Chicago Federation executive, now president of the AES, was made a member of the ICRE Committee on Field Program, so that consideration could be given to a joint meeting of ECOA and AES at Lake Geneva that summer. (One of the standard jokes of this period had to do with the proper salutation of the AES president. One year we were writing, “Dear Deer”; and the next, “Dear Mee”!) January 9 Dr. Guild wrote, “The atmosphere has changed wonderfully as relates to the merging of the meetings of the ECOA and the AES.” On February 2 Dr. Munro reported that 23 of the 26 ECOA replies were unqualifiedly in favor of joint sessions; two others were favorable “under conditions which will undoubtedly be met”; and only one raised any questions.

Inter-Council Field Committee (ICFC), 1935-1939

On January 6, 1935, at the Robert Morris Hotel, Philadelphia, the Joint Committee of the FC Field Department, the Joint Administrative Committee of the two HMC's, and the ICRE Committee on Field Program, called to consider relationships and issues involved in mergers of state councils,” elected Dr. W. R. King as chairman and Harry C. Munro as secretary. This was only a little over three years from the time when Dr. King had made his first proposals for unification. This Joint Committee now recommended “that the FC, the HMC's, and the ICRE consider the possibility of a joint field staff and field department; and that a joint committee on integration of field activities, program, and staff be regularly appointed to assist the executives responsible for such integration and to study the possibility and wisdom of such a joint field department.”⁶⁵ No standard form was recommended for every situation, but assurance was sought “that religious education will have adequate financial support, leadership, promotion, and supervision.” (In the light of the history set forth in Chapter II, and the organizational patterns already achieved, was this not a proper insistence?)

The unification that had become routine at the local level, and more and more widespread at the state level, was now well on its way at the national level, specially for those staff persons in charge of field outreach and relationships.

In February 1935 on the suggestion of a representative meeting of its Committee on Field Program, after consideration by its Educational Commission and its Committee on Reference and Counsel, the ICRE approved appointments for the proposed Inter-Council Field Committee (ICFC), whose function would be to clear, integrate, and allocate responsibilities for those field activities in which two or more of the national interdenominational agencies were involved. Though the January 6 joint action on "Principles for Guidance in State Council Mergers" was approved, the question was raised as to whether "relations broader than those involved in field activity do not call for more adequate provision than now exists for their clearance." *The Field Counselor* and *Church Federation Field* were each to be sent to the other's list. The difficulties in relating program items of interest to religious education personnel only, or to church federation men only, or to both secretarial groups, in planning for Lake Geneva, were faced.

On May 1, Dr. King wrote, "I regard the work of field organization as fundamental and basic. Without an inclusive council of churches in each state and city we cannot hope to do a constructive work. The time is ripe for this organizational work."⁶⁶ On May 8 participation in the proposed Joint Committee was recommended by the FC's Field Department, to its Executive Committee, with nominations. Careful study of pensions was urged, with AES cooperation requested.

On June 29 and 30, at Conference Point, a joint staff session,⁶⁷ after reviewing the various actions already taken, favored working cooperation, as a step toward a more formal merger. Dr. King and Dr. Munro were to formulate a policy statement. On July 1 three Federal Council secretaries, four ICRE, a Home Missions staff representative, and the executive secretary of the NCFCW met as the Inter-Council Field Committee (ICFC) and elected Dr. King chairman. Though there was a question as to whether the relationships of state and local to national bodies were a function of this committee or of the field departments of each national body,⁶⁸ it soon "became perfectly obvious that closer relationships and more frequent conferences among these staffs are indispensable to proper correlation of the several agencies."⁶⁹ Separate and joint sessions of the state and local secretaries followed, with certain national personnel also present.

Simultaneous Sessions of ECOA and AES, 1935-1940

At Conference Point, June 29, July 2, 3, and 5, 1935, the ECOA ended its first year with 35 cents on hand! Dues, which had been paid by 51 persons, were now raised to 50¢. Walter E. Myers of Pennsyl-

vania was elected chairman of ECOA. Cooperation with the State and Regional Executives' Section was voted in February. The ECOA now took over, for its last years, the conduct of the Conference Point Council Officers' Training School (C.O.T.S.).

The AES also met, July 1 to 6, with 31 present. There were *parallel and joint assemblies*, with a number of persons belonging to both bodies. At the AES there were 23 city and state and eight FC secretaries present, and Dr. Harold McAfee Robinson, representing the ICRE; also four guests and fifteen wives or children. Joint sessions of the AES and ECOA for 1936 looking toward more vital relationships were voted, with representatives of the HMC, FC, and NCFCW to be invited. The study of pensions was continued. At the conclusion of these sessions it was suggested that "at next year's meeting we have less program from national leaders, and more time to discuss our own problems."⁷⁰ Later the same local secretary said, "I earnestly hope the Program Committee will not hand over all the time to the Federal Council secretaries." "We want the FC secretaries with us, but they felt they could not afford to come unless they could promote their work." The officers were continued until the biennial meeting of the Federal Council in December. A June balance of \$145.78 was reported.

Seventy-seven persons were present at these simultaneous sessions, which "suited the convenience of more than a third of the total number who are secretaries of merged councils."⁷¹

After a 21-week trip by car of 13,500 miles, Dr. Guild said to the FC Field Department December 11, 1935, "Protestant cooperation has reached the highest point nationally it has attained." "In nearly every city unification has taken place. The states are swinging into line." At the close of 1935 Dr. Guild pointed out that many executives were members of both the ECOA and the AES. "These (he said) are the men and women who are actually doing the cooperative work and are most vitally concerned. They created the conditions that necessitated national readjustments. The unification of cooperative work on city and state levels has preceded unification on national levels, even such limited unification as is manifested in the work of the Joint Committee on Problems of Relationships."

He also reported that though city and state councils had been "seriously handicapped by lack of funds, in some cases this has resulted in arousing volunteer service that has given renewed vitality to councils. Today there are as many cities having employed executives

and established headquarters as there were at the beginning of the depression, one having failed and one new having been formed. Some cities are reporting improved financial conditions."

Dr. Roy G. Ross (now general secretary of the National Council of Churches) was elected general secretary of the ICRE at its 1936 annual meeting.⁷² In March 1936 responses from ten states where mergers were well along or completed, and four where unification had been discussed, revealed perceptible differences in ICRE, FC, and HMC perspectives.

A meeting of the ICFC planned for November 1935 had to be cancelled, but by early 1936 the time was ripe for cooperative action. On April 13 and 14, at the Parkside Hotel, New York, the ICFC voted that "we recognize the ultimate desirability of a complete union of the Field Departments of the FC, the ICRE, and the HMC's."⁷³ The general secretaries were asked to draft a general plan of procedure.

Similarly on April 15 at the FC Field Department the actions of the ICFC were approved or properly referred. (On June 5 the FC Executive Committee took the required actions.) Dr. Cavert now presented a "Procedure Suggested for Moving Toward a Joint Field Department."

Toward an approved 1936 budget of \$9,300 the FC Field Department was supposed to raise \$2,000. Need was felt for a finance man, and for regional offices. Expenses for three months had exceeded the budget by \$55.

On June 25, at a meeting of national executives at the ICRE office, the field policies and staff duties of each agency were considered. There was consultation as to field staff appointments. It was suggested that in the field each might act for all. On the 26th the Joint Staff, meeting at Conference Point, felt that there might well be two meetings of the total staffs each year, perhaps in June and December, with one meeting of the ICFC in December.

The AES met at Conference Point June 29 to July 3, 1936. (Rates: \$9.00 for six days; or \$2.50 a day, two in a room, \$3.00 single—including meals!) There were joint sessions with the ECOA, which held its meetings June 29, 30, and July 2. At the AES Dr. Cavert spoke of the federal and local councils. Church federations and community agencies were discussed. Dr. Miller of Connecticut made a significant analysis of the philosophy of state council work. There were 27 persons in the ECOA travel pool. Dr. Ross made a "General

Statement on the Relations of the ICRE and State Councils," and presided at a joint session where relations of national and state councils were considered.

Dr. W. C. Bower led a joint seminar July 1-3. Joint dates for 1937 were approved. Harry C. Munro was made chairman of a joint program committee. In 1937 all save business and some evening sessions were to be made joint.

At the September 23, 24, 1935, meeting of the ICFC it was voted to make the Committee more inclusive. "The need of a more systematic means of selecting, training, and placing secretaries in state and city council positions was discussed." A subcommittee was appointed. Should there be a *Field Bulletin*? Why? What for? A committee was appointed.

On November 19 the FC Field Department gave appropriate recognition to the service rendered by Fred B. Smith, who had died September 3, 1936; also to that of Dr. Roy B. Guild, who was again to drop out of the picture at the end of the year. Said Dr. Cavert of Dr. Guild,⁷⁴ "To him the churches are indebted more than to any other person for the remarkable development of interchurch cooperation in state and local areas during the last quarter of a century." In his own biennial report Dr. Guild predicted, "The next great and permanent advance in united Protestantism will come through state-wide mobilization of Protestant forces."

The evidence of slowly accelerating, solid growth in the church federation movement, chiefly in the states, is clear: The 1931 March FC mimeographed directory listed 49 city, 7 state, and Puerto Rican councils. In 1934 there were 50 city and 10 state councils of churches; in November 1936 there were 17 state councils, each with an office and one or more employed secretaries. Chairman H. Paul Douglass led a discussion, "What Next for the Field Department?"

Organizationally, at the national level, the field committees of the cooperating agencies were now growing closer and closer together, through involvement in the same state and local situations. Their perspectives were still different, but their concerns were increasingly mutual.

A joint staff conference was held at the Parkside Hotel December 14 to 17, 1936. On the 15th and 16th the ICFC voted that in 1937 the AES be requested to give "adequate consideration of criteria or goals essential for evaluating and guiding in the organization, relation-

ships, procedures, and program of a state council." Experimentation in states without any interdenominational agency was considered. Intensive cultivation of selected merger situations was suggested. Expanding functions of existing organizations (a CRE into an inclusive CC) was a possibility. No action was taken as to a bulletin.

Now that the great depression was becoming only an unhappy memory, and World War II (rather than peaceful prosperity) was still around the corner of the years to come, the Oxford (Life and Work) and Edinburgh (Faith and Order) Conferences marked 1937 as a year of major ecumenical importance. At home a new set of leaders was displacing the old.

The ECOA mustered an attendance of 33 at the YMCA Hotel, Chicago, on Feb. 9, chiefly to discuss the 1937 C.O.T.S. In connection with the April 9 and 10 conference on the projected 1937-8 United Christian Advance (Deshler-Wallick, Columbus) there was a called meeting of the ICFC, which included the United Stewardship Council (USC). Events were moving rapidly toward the greater coordination and unification of seven interdenominational bodies, and eventually still others would be involved. The "ultimate objective" was recognized as "the fullest possible measure of unity among all Christian forces." "As a preliminary step" it was proposed to "integrate so far as possible all field activities and programs of denominational and interdenominational organizations." The ICFC and the Inter-Council Staff were now going concerns.

Dr. Merle N. English (Methodist), speaking for the ICRE's Committee on Field Program, was "glad the ICRE is becoming 'field conscious.'" Dr. Munro said: "Our difficulties (*re* state councils) are due to our failure to make administratively effective on a wide scale any adequate philosophy of the total task of Christian education." Dr. Walter D. Howell (Presbyterian, USA) spoke on "Making State Councils More Truly Interdenominational" and "Denominational Assistance to State Councils." All sorts of experiments were reported. Financing was crucial. Plans for future field service were suggested.

On May 13 the FCFD appointed a committee to give thorough study to the best basis of representation in city and state councils. The USC indicated its desire to belong to the ICFC. The choice of a new FC field executive was to be made in consultation with the HMC and ICRE. The ICFC was requested to formulate procedures by which the new field executives might plan and administer a common field program for the councils to which they are responsible. The question was

raised, "Are state mergers too rapid?" Another, "Could the ICRE and FC Field Committees be identical?" Also, "Should the FC re-open the question of territorial as well as denominational membership?" Dr. King was reported to be in the hospital for a complete rest. In June the ICRE Bureau of Research issued a document on "Community Cooperation in Religious Education—Brief Case Descriptions."

July 2 to 7, 1937, at Conference Point, the AES assembled 34 persons, including guests. Pensions were again discussed. A year book was suggested. Duplications in denominational and interdenominational mailings caused some concern. The treasury showed a June 30 balance of \$332.56. The 20th Christian Education Convention was announced for Columbus, June 28 to July 3, 1938. A joint field man for the FC and the ICRE was favored. The difference between the two national bodies in the matter of geographical representation was pointed out. Dr. Munro was made chairman of a joint committee—seven from AES, and seven from ECOA; and two from each group were placed on the 1938 program committee. W. L. Darby, of Washington, D.C., was elected president of AES; and Emory M. Nelson of Scranton began a term of several years as secretary.

The ECOA also met on July 4, 8, and 9 at the same place, with 38 persons participating in the \$119.10 travel pool. Receipts for the year had amounted to \$57.83; there was a balance of \$29.03. E. T. Albertson of Indiana was elected chairman. A joint panel discussion considered the "Relation of City, State, and National Councils and Federations." It was agreed that secretaries of merged state councils should be put on the ECOA mailing list—no mention was made of merged city councils. Quotas (from 5 to 1,500) were allotted to 37 states for the 1938 ICRE Convention. It was recognized that "Just as state mergers are calling for a joint field service, a joint field service may lead to a demand for a merger of national interdenominational agencies."

On October 13, 1937, Roy G. Ross reported on "Future Plans for Field Service." Dr. Forrest L. Knapp was now transferred to part-time work in general field administration, and John B. Ketcham was called as his associate director.

The joint staff met on December 1, and the ICFC on December 2. Dr. King had now retired, having been succeeded December 1, 1937, by Dr. Mark A. Dawber. It was voted to appoint a subcommittee to study and report at the next meeting on the possibilities of developing a Joint Field Department for two or more of the councils. Dr.

Hermann N. Morse was elected ICFC chairman. (Dr. Morse, long the executive of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, USA, brought to this post, and later as secretary of the Planning Committee for the National Council, a breadth of knowledge and depth of wisdom, along with an abundance of good humor, that made all his utterances and writings a tremendous contribution to church cooperation at every level.) At this ICFC meeting there was discussion of the United Christian Advance and of the Christian Adult Movement.

December 16 to 20, 1937, a special conference called by the ECOA convened 27 state and city council executives and ICRE leaders (39 regrets). The ECOA also met in Chicago on February 8, 1938, with 40 present. Dr. Ross said, in summarizing the discussion: "The relationship of the state and national work interdenominationally ought to be comparable in close-knit fellowship and in service to that which exists in the national denominational staff and the state denominational staff. . . . The time must come when all the state and city secretaries will meet with the International Council staff and face the interdenominational task together. In no other way can we succeed."

By February the suggestion⁷⁵ was made that the secretaries might well meet in or near Columbus, in connection with the ICRE Convention, rather than at Lake Geneva, with at least one period for each group (AES and ECOA), and some joint emphasis on theology! By March 5 this suggestion crystallized into a call for joint sessions at Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio, for 3½ days, at a cost of \$5.00 for room and board.

Early in 1938⁷⁶ it was announced that Dr. J. Quinter Miller would head the FC field program, to begin, part-time, on September 1. He actually got started on September 15, also continuing in Connecticut for a time. Because of his interest in religious education, his appointment was particularly happy. The ICFC met April 21, 1938; the next day, with 17 present, F. L. Knapp was made executive secretary. No action was taken as to a suggested bulletin. Revised proposals for the preliminary organization of an Inter-Council Field Department (ICFD) were adopted.

At Otterbein on July 5 the ECOA elected W. T. Clemens of New York State as its president. A June 30 balance amounted to \$102.01. A joint meeting at Lake Geneva in 1939 was approved, with invitations to national staff people—denominational and interdenominational; and the NCFCW was to hold its annual conference on adjoining dates. A repetition of the February meeting in Chicago was not favored.

The AES met simultaneously, electing J. Henry Carpenter of Brooklyn as president; Dr. Guild was present. Dr. H. Paul Douglass spoke on the "new ecumenical note." Increased Sunday school attendance was reported. Pensions were again up for discussion. Should the new organization include lay persons? What about relationships to the FC? Was a new manual of cooperation needed? The need of a new financial policy for the AES was pointed out. Joint sessions at Lake Geneva in 1939 were approved. Probably a merger of the two groups could have been voted at this 1938 session—but not unanimously. Two years more were needed to make the action a wholehearted one.

On December 6 to 8, at the Buffalo Statler, six field secretaries of the FC, HMC, CCW, and ICRE, met; on the 9th the ICFC met. Action of the agencies on proposals for preliminary organization was reported. There was tentative definition of functions, relationships, staff functions and responsibility, and frequency of meetings; also as to the relation of the proposed department to other phases of the work of the cooperating agencies.

"Experiences in Cooperation" came out in a mimeographed edition on June 30, 1939; to be issued again, in printed revised form, functionally arranged, in 1941.

On February 9 and 10 in Chicago the ICRE Committee on Field Program met, and was continued; but it transferred all possible functions to the ICFD. The March *FC Bulletin* notes that the ICRE had approved the ICFD.

Thirty AES and 31 ECOA members met at Conference Point as part of a "National Conference of the Employed Staffs of Interdenominational Agencies, July 2 to 7," attended by a total of 74 persons, including guests. The ECOA showed a balance of \$104.91; \$84.13 was due on bills outstanding. Frank Jennings of Massachusetts was elected president. The AES, which showed a balance of \$466.73, elected Harlan M. Frost of Toledo as president, and Evah Lane of Kansas City as secretary. Plans for the possible merger of the two professional organizations were now implemented, to become effective in 1940. Much of the discussion had to do with program emphases; and it was discovered that the interests of the two organizations overlapped so much that joint consideration of many issues was desirable and more or less inevitable.

Inter-Council Field Department (ICFD), 1939-1950

On October 5, 1939, was held the first session of the ICFD, succeeding the less formal ICFC. Attendance indicated interest; eight

councils, entitled to from three to a dozen representatives, or a total of 47 persons, were actually represented by 41 people; each council had at least one person present, and regrets were received from ten absentees. The work of the ICFC from July 1, 1935, was reviewed. By February 1937 nineteen major projects had been considered. A definite plan for the ICFD was proposed in April 1938 for a suggested experimental period of two years.⁷⁷ "The state, city, and local councils of churches now have an affiliated relationship through which more democratic sharing in policy and program-making is possible. With them we maintain the type of harmonious cooperation resulting between two or more completely free and autonomous agencies that mutually recognize and serve a common purpose and program." Six possible functions of the ICFD were⁷⁸ voted, and it was decided that the emphasis for the next two years be "Making Ecumenicity Local."

Association of Council Secretaries (ACS), 1940

The grass-roots personnel had also been getting together. The year 1940 was noteworthy for the merger of the ECOA and the AES into the Association of Council Secretaries, which held its first meeting as an integrated professional group in July. Though this "historic occasion" was more than ten years before the national unification was to take place, it had already been preceded, as we have observed, by seven years of inter-agency conference and by six years of staff unification with reference to national field outreach. The pressure of their common interest in the field task was bringing together the national interdenominational agencies. A 1938 overture from the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, USA (not previously mentioned) had greatly accelerated the impulses toward closer national relationships, and was to result in formal processes beginning in 1941.

Meanwhile the state and local base was being securely built. In 1931 there had been 49 city councils; by 1939 there were 52. In 1940 there were 58 cities listed as served by city or state councils; and 22 state councils with paid executives, serving 23 states. The state situation had advanced much more rapidly—partly through necessity, largely through the concentrated, cooperative effort of the national agencies of interdenominational cooperation. The inevitable result of the development of inclusive state councils was to be a rapid increase in city and county councils of churches. Many county councils of religious education expanded their horizons and became inclusive councils of churches. Not all of these survived, as the fluctuations in national totals make evident.

In Chicago, February 5 to 10, the Executive Committee of the ICRE was "not as yet convinced of the desirability or practicability of the proposal for union in a single corporate body." It expressed its approval, however, of cooperation with the FC and other agencies in all matters of common interest, and appointed a committee to study relationships, with the proviso that this did not involve any committal to actual union."⁷⁹ Differences in tempo were involved, but the trend continued to be unmistakable. The inherent tension between cooperation and union was as clear among interdenominational bodies as among denominational.

On February 7 and 8, 1940, the ICRE Committee on Field Program (CFP) heard from Dr. J. Quinter Miller a verbal report of the first meeting of the ICFD in October 1939 and its staff council; of its functions and procedures. Mr. Ketcham reviewed the functions already transferred to the ICFD and the remaining tasks of the CFP. A study of the whole field situation inevitably involved the question of the overlapping of denominational and interdenominational field activities. The ICRE CFP met again April 12 and 13 in Chicago.

The ICFD held its second meeting at the Stevens Hotel, Chicago, April 15 and 16, 1940.⁸⁰ A revised statement of its functions and procedures was given careful consideration, and referred to the member agencies. A study of national interdenominational pamphlet literature, its production and distribution, was authorized. Numerous field reports were made. Coordination of professional field service was again discussed, and calendar clearance procedures. The preparation of volunteer field leadership was given attention. Sample constitutions, for councils without paid leadership, were discussed.

On April 17 the Inter-Council Field Staff (five present) considered how to get clearance for "tools," etc. It was agreed that each council would make such use as it could of materials issued by the others.

On May 24 the Joint Committee of the AES and the ECOA met to consider a proposed ACS Constitution and the reasons for a merged professional association. On June 3, as part of the FC appraisal, Ralph C. McAfee, now returned to the pastorate, sent out a letter of inquiry. One four-page reply, dated June 6, from this writer, ventured the opinion that "Protestants do not and cannot understand the maze of interdenominational overhead. We must move as rapidly as possible toward a single federal structure in America." It was little realized that even with "a single structure" the "maze" would still be present, inevitably and desirably.

In connection with the National Conference of the Employed Staffs of Interdenominational Agencies, July 8 to 13, 1940, at Conference Point, 53 persons were in attendance at the first session of the Association of Council Secretaries (the ACS, merging the AES and ECOA). Eight of these represented state bodies; nine other states had city council personnel present; twenty cities were represented by 24 secretaries; four national councils had a total of 17 persons in attendance. O. M. Walton of Cleveland and Evah Lane of Kansas City, Mo., were elected president and secretary. The ECOA had a July 10 balance of \$124.86; the AES, August 1, \$238.01.

Dean Weigle (seminar on "The Christian Community") and Miss Ruth Seabury ("Building the World Christian Community") were conference leaders. Various matters were referred to the ICFD, including the circulation of four significant papers. "The development of the Association of Council Secretaries is closely associated with the Conference Point Camp at Lake Geneva."⁸¹ That which had started out with complex and competitive origins was now seen to be a unity of distinguishable but closely inter-related interests. Party lines, as expressed in the former professional organizations, had almost vanished; and the merger was now speedily effected, with little or no opposition.

At its September 27 and 28 meeting in New York, the ICFD continued Dr. Morse as chairman, and named Rev. John B. Ketcham as secretary.

Merger, First Stage, Accomplished

From 1932 to 1950 there was marked consolidation and steady, slowly accelerating growth in the council movement, until the organization of the National Council of Churches in 1950. The year 1940 had been significant in that the unification of state and local leadership, and much of the national, in a single professional organization, had been achieved. Along with this perhaps as one cause of it—in any case as an accompaniment of it, in part the occasion and in part the effect of it—had come the consolidation of a variety of national field approaches. The merging 1930's, with their strengthening of the state councils, were now giving way to the expectant 1940's with their even more vigorous and unified field promotion.

This new thrust was again accelerated by events outside the ordinary life of parishes, local communities, or even states and commonwealths. On September 1, 1939, Hitler, long regarded as a nuisance, attacked Poland; in 1940 his forces invaded Denmark, Norway, the Low Countries, and France. The second World War was no longer "phony." The world was breaking up, but church forces were getting together.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter VII

- ¹ Letter of AES President, George L. Ford, March 28, 1932.
- ² *FC 1932 Report*, p. 265.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 270.
- ⁴ (Probably) in his report to the Advisory Committee, October 28, 1932.
- ⁵ Thos. Nelson & Sons.
- ⁶ Yale University Press.
- ⁷ Harper, xv, 349 pp.
- ⁸ Rich, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
- ⁹ See 1932 *FC Report*, pp. 92 ff.
- ¹⁰ See "Highlights" of the AES 1933 Meeting, including brief summary of this writer's study of church federation finances that year.
- ¹¹ *FC Bulletin*, October, 1918.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, December, 1921; January, 1922; May-June, 1926.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, December, 1922; January, 1923. (*Cf.* also AES 1923 finding, reaffirmed in 1924.)
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, January, 1927.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, March-April, 1926.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, April, 1930.
- ¹⁷ Paper No. 6 (6 pp.) at the 1933 AES, by this writer.
- ¹⁸ *FC Bulletin*, May, 1932.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, September, 1931.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, January, 1933 editorial.
- ²¹ Guild memo, November 15, 1933.
- ²² *IJRE*, March, 1931.
- ²³ Letter to Dr. Guild, March 4, 1933.
- ²⁴ *IJRE*, December, 1933.
- ²⁵ FCB, February, 1934.
- ²⁶ *Cf.* this writer's "Toward Still More Effective Councils of Churches" (in Seattle and Washington), 1958, pp. 14-17. Will new conditions argue in favor of a separate organization for Baltimore?
- ²⁷ See Appendix II for additional state council developments.
- ²⁸ *IJRE*, December, 1934.
- ²⁹ *IJRE*, September, 1935.
- ³⁰ *IJRE*, February, 1940.
- ³¹ *IJRE*, May & September, 1933.
- ³² *IJRE*, March, 1935.
- ³³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁴ *IJRE*, July, 1935.
- ³⁵ *IJRE*, September, 1935.
- ³⁶ FCB, December, 1938.
- ³⁷ *IJRE*, December, 1927.
- ³⁸ *IJRE*, September, 1932.
- ³⁹ *IJRE*, October, 1931; September, 1934.
- ⁴⁰ *IJRE*, January, 1936.
- ⁴¹ *IJRE*, May, 1940.
- ⁴² *IJRE*, October, 1940.

- ⁴³ A few instances of personnel changes will illustrate:
 September, 1931: Paul H. Vieth goes from the ICRE to Yale; New Jersey is fruitfully experimenting with a "cooperating Staff" made up of denominational religious education workers whose services are made available interdenominationally. (But the New Jersey merger was not effected until 1945.)
 October, 1931: Myron C. Settle goes to Kansas.
 December, 1934: Robert W. Searle succeeds W. B. Millar in the Greater New York Federation.
 February, 1935: Wilbur T. Clemens succeeds W. G. Landes in New York State.
 April, 1935: E. E. Halpenny resigns in Michigan, Ione Catton becomes acting secretary.
 May, 1935: J. W. McDonald, former Presbytery executive, begins service in Kansas City, Mo.
 November, 1935: Frank Jennings goes to Massachusetts.
 January, 1936: A. T. Arnold of Ohio "has spent more years in interdenominational work than any person now living and more than any one who has ever lived" ⁴³ in Illinois, West Virginia, and Ohio.
 November, 1938: I. George Nace (later of DHM, NCC) had now gone from the pastorate, after service in Japan, to Portland and Oregon.
- ⁴⁴ *FC Bulletin*, September, 1929, pp. 20, 21. See also Minutes of Extension Committee, March 21, 1929 and February 28, 1930; and of AES Executive Committee, October 23, 1930.
- ⁴⁵ Personal letter, Dr. Zahniser to Dr. Guild.
- ⁴⁶ *Cf.* the *FC Quadrennial Report*, 1928-1932, pp. 92-101.
- ⁴⁷ *FC 1932 Report*, pp. 7, 36.
- ⁴⁸ See *International Journal*, October, 1930.
- ⁴⁹ Personal letter to Dr. Guild, January 1, 1933.
- ⁵⁰ The *FC Bulletin*, March, 1933, carried a half-page article, "Toward Fuller Co-operation in State Areas," with Dr. Magill's full approval.
- ⁵¹ *FC 1933 Report*, p. 113.
- ⁵² *International Journal*, April, 1933.
- ⁵³ Dr. Guild's 1933 Report.
- ⁵⁴ December 12, 1933. *Cf.* Dr. Guild's December 30, 1933 general letter.
- ⁵⁵ Informal Conference, December 21, 1933. Adjournment to March, 1934.
- ⁵⁶ *FC 1933 Report*, pp. 34-36.
- ⁵⁷ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
- ⁵⁸ See *IJRE*, April, 1934; *cf.* also, *IJRE*, November, 1940: "Another Milestone—Recent Developments of the UCYM," by Ivan M. Gould; also *IJRE*, December, 1959, pp. 6 ff.: "The Five Stages of the UCYM," a history of its first 25 years, with pictures of executive staff members—"I. The Idealistic Period," "II. The Period of Reappraisal," "III. The Theological Period," "IV. The Ecclesiastical Period," "V. The Period of Dialogue." Obviously this too is a phase of this history that deserves a whole chapter, or even a separate volume. Any adequate treatment of youth work would also give extended attention to the noteworthy achievement under the leadership of John L. Alexander, in relation to subsequent significant contributions of the Danforth Foundation.
- ⁵⁹ See late 1934 issues of the *Journal*.
- ⁶⁰ The April 1935 *Journal* said, "The Fellowship of Christian Workers has been made entirely local in its administration."
- ⁶¹ *Cf.* Chapter II. See Hayden L. Stright's historical statement in the 1954 AES Minutes.
- ⁶² Dr. Munro in particular faithfully sounded this warning note.
- ⁶³ "Biennial Report" of the FC Field Department.

- ⁶⁴ FC Field Department memo, January, 1935.
- ⁶⁵ See Minutes and Findings of this meeting, Finding No. 9, p. 3.
- ⁶⁶ Personal letter.
- ⁶⁷ Cf. *International Journal*, July, 1935; also *ibid.*, September, 1935, p. 22—"Council Staffs in Joint Conference."
- ⁶⁸ Minutes of ICFC, July 1, 1935.
- ⁶⁹ P. 5 of 8-page. "Working Document," ICFC, April 13, 14, 1936.
- ⁷⁰ AES 1935 Minutes, p. 8—Executive Committee Session.
- ⁷¹ *International Journal*, September, 1935.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, April, 1936.
- ⁷³ P. 4, item 5a, of the Minutes of the ICFC meeting.
- ⁷⁴ *FC 1936 Report*, p. 70.
- ⁷⁵ Forrest L. Knapp to ECOA members.
- ⁷⁶ *FC Bulletin*, April, 1938.
- ⁷⁷ J. Quinter Miller to the FC.
- ⁷⁸ Dr. Knapp to Dr. Miller.
- ⁷⁹ *FC Bulletin*, March, 1938. The April 1940 *Journal* reported the attendance of 947 members of professional and advisory sections, nearly 200 religious education students, and 152 other visitors.
- ⁸⁰ Cf. the *International Journal*, June 1940, "National Inter-Church Council Relationships," a statement by the ICRE General Secretary, recording the February 10 action. See 27 pp. of Minutes.
- ⁸¹ Cf. Note (61) above.

The Expectant Forties

Planet Shrinks, Councils Consolidate

With consolidation of church cooperation forces now "just around the corner," the whole movement pushed forward vigorously during the 1940's. This chapter will sketch first the enlargement of the professional fellowship of local, state, and national executives; and will then turn to national and world developments, interspersed with instances of the state and local cooperative enterprise.

The "New Order" Enlarges Its Fellowship

A week after Hitler invaded Russia, the ACS met, June 20 to July 5, 1941, at Conference Point, in its first annual meeting as a unified body. Those attending included 36 city, 19 national, and 11 state secretaries; these with wives, special leaders, and others, made a total of 84 persons. Various ICRE papers were presented, and also documents on "Missions in Local Councils," "Field Program and Research," and other topics. It was felt that "a definite foundation of conviction (should be) brought to the committee on arrangements and also to the conference on relations of interdenominational agencies, expressing the mind of state and city executives with respect to plans for any new all-inclusive interdenominational agency, and that we should be represented on the committee and at the conference meeting at Atlantic City in December." It was accordingly voted to "refer to the executive committee for study, consultation, and report, the question of how the city, county, and state secretaries can be given more responsibility for national program building and time schedules." John W. Harms was elected president and this writer vice-president in charge of the 1942 program.

Dr. J. Quinter Miller, reporting for the ICFD, pointed out the staff lists now printed in the *Year Book of American Churches*. The origins of what was later to be the Committee for Cooperative Field Research emerge in a suggestion that the ICFD might make available survey and research field service.

Program personnel in 1941 included Dr. E. Stanley Jones (three addresses), Dr. Toyohika Kagawa (two addresses), and Dr. Chester S. Miao of China. In the light of the world situation the friendly re-

lation between these two Christians from the Far East was especially significant. Dr. F. Ernest Johnson presented "Current Theological Trends"—a new emphasis for ecclesiastical technicians. Other significant items crowded a particularly opulent program.

A previous balance of \$355.12 was now reduced to \$252.59 (including \$69 already paid in 1941-2); expenditures for the year (\$607.31) had exceeded income (\$435.78) by \$171.53. Dues had been paid by 56 local, 29 state, and 32 national persons, and by two associate members; contributions had been received from 26 local, 13 state, and 4 national councils. Thus, 119 persons and 43 organizations had helped financially.

From June 28 to July 3, 1942, at Conference Point, the second annual session of the ACS¹ again attracted more than 80 persons. A balance of \$218.90 was reported. Under the leadership of Dr. W. C. Bower, the chief seminar considered "Tensions in American Life Today," "The Reconciling Ministry or Function of the Church," and "Tension and Condition of Creative Thinking and Growing Values." In response to 165 queries sent out by O. M. Walton, 37 replies furnished significant "Facts and Figures." J. Quinter Miller presented the "Plan Book" for discussion as an initial step in showing how American cooperative Christianity was "Moving Forward Together." Inevitably a major concern was "The Ministry of the Church in Wartime."² Soon the emphasis would be shifting to returning service men, demobilization, and post-war activities; but meanwhile the war years had to be lived through, in increasing realization of the availability of terrifying new powers of destruction. Hugh C. Burr was elected president, Harry W. Becker of Missouri vice president and program chairman.³

The ACS, augmented by church workers in camp and defense communities, in the United Christian Adult Movement, and in Indian schools, met June 28 to July 3, 1943, at Conference Point. A total of 102 local, state, and national executives were present. J. Burt Bouwman of Michigan was elected president, with John W. Meloy of Wichita and E. C. Farnham of Los Angeles as vice presidents in charge of program and membership. On July 2 "The Stake of States and Cities in the New (National) Organization" was considered. As Dr. Harms put it, "the ACS desired representation in the policy-making processes of the organization. The basic philosophy developed in the discussion," he asserted, "is that the whole matter rests on the assumption that territorial councils are as valid ecclesiastical bodies as the national denominational bodies." This would appear to be an assertion or assumption most congenial to the typical ACS member, but not yet

fully established in the mind of many denominational leaders without experience in interdenominational cooperation at the state and local levels. On the other hand, it is obvious that the measure of participation in the policy-forming process by members of the ACS, and probably by the Association as a whole, had been considerable. On June 30, 1943, a first draft of a report of a significant committee was presented to the ACS under the title "Toward a More Ecumenical Church." In a greatly revised form, this committee issued an article in the Autumn 1944⁴ number of *Christendom* on "The Philosophy of Church Cooperation" by this writer.

June 19 to 22, 1944, the ACS, again augmented by workers in Camp and Defense Communities, met at Conference Point, with 89 city, state, and national executives present. E. C. Farnham was advanced to the presidency; and Willis R. Ford of Baltimore elected Program Chairman, a new position in its own right. A panel of a dozen, with eleven alternates, was elected to represent the ACS at the Federal Council. Dr. Hermann N. Morse lectured on "The Church's Task, How to Face It Cooperatively." Evening joint sessions were devoted to anticipating "The Church's Ministry to Post-War Needs." A "Primer for New Secretaries" began a series of helpful annual documents, intended to inform and inspire new workers. Paid ACS membership was now approximately 150, and there was a cash balance of about \$1,100.

Because of war-time transportation restrictions, the 1945 ACS annual meeting was cancelled, and its officers continued. But 44 were present at a midwest regional conference at Conference Point June 19 to 22, when Dr. Harms read a close-packed paper on "The Relations of the Denominations to One Another through Councils of Churches"; and 62 staff persons gathered in the western area December 10 and 11.

The ACS⁵ and workers among Indians met July 12 to 22, 1946, at Conference Point, and considered "Corporate Functions of the Church in the Community." Attendance totaled 225 in the evenings.⁶ No roll seems to have been kept, and no finance report appears to be available; but the treasurer had a balance of \$1,606.64, probably subject to reduction by accounts payable. Officers elected included J. Henry Carpenter, of Brooklyn, as president; and Hughbert Landram, then of San Francisco, as program chairman.

The June 16-21, 1947, ACS meeting was combined with a Conference on "The Church and Urban Life." Harry C. Munro made a report on "An Integrated Protestant Strategy," involving both denomi-

national and council approaches. Certain "Suggested Normative Principles," first reported at the April 1947 ICFD meeting, were further reviewed. Receipts for the ACS year, exclusive of the \$857.91 balance after the previous annual meeting, amounted to \$1,423.98; this provided a balance on hand of \$1,611.19, reduced to \$465.79 when all accounts were paid. Expenses for 1946-7 seem to have exceeded receipts by \$392.12. Willis R. Ford of Baltimore was elected president, Oliver B. Gordon of Philadelphia program chairman.

The ACS met as usual at Conference Point June 21 to 26, 1948, to discuss "Man's Disorder and God's Design in the Community"—in the effort to make ecumenicity local. Dr. H. Paul Douglass (ably reported by Lemuel Peterson, now of Seattle) spoke on "The Philosophy of the Community." "The Theology of the Community," and "The Sociology of the Community." Vesper talks by Dr. Ansley Moore of Pittsburgh were specially helpful. Seminar groups were organized.

City and county experiences in the field of social education and action in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Louisville, Scranton, New York, Columbus, and Cincinnati were cited. Cincinnati ventured the opinion that "the Protestant vice is revolutionitis, which accomplishes nothing." Similar reports were made on other functions.

One session was devoted to state and regional work, with particular consideration given to state councils and the denominations, and to state councils and local councils.

Dr. Earl F. Adams spoke on the representation of state and city councils in the NCC. Though J. Henry Carpenter (Brooklyn) insisted that "We need local men in the planning of national projects," Alton M. Motter (St. Paul) was sure that his denomination (Lutheran) would oppose such representation in the framework of the Federal Council. Dr. Miller explained the importance of action that was "constitutionally responsible." A panel of 18, representing eight denominations (Baptist, Congregational, Christian, Disciples, Evangelical and Reformed, Methodist, Presbyterian USA, Presbyterian US, and United Presbyterian), were elected as FC representatives. It was voted that the ACS take steps immediately to study relationships to the new NCC with reference to program, structure, and finances, through a committee to be appointed by the new executive committee, consisting of three city and three state executives, this committee to seek suitable representation of local, city, and state councils on the national planning committee. An effort was to be made to get denominational participation in the 1949 ACS sessions. A 1948 preconference orientation session

had involved 21 secretaries and staff persons, more than the total attendance at the early AES gatherings. (The ICRE had also held a special conference on co-operative education, preceding the ACS.)⁷ An attendance of 168 persons was recorded, with 30 regrets. Balances for a three-year period show a healthy state of ACS finances:

July 15, 1946	\$857.91
July 24, 1947	465.79
July 26, 1948	671.97

Henry Reed Bowen of New Jersey was elected president, and Harvey W. Hollis of Albany, N.Y., program chairman.

In June 1949 the ICRE again had a special conference on co-operative education, and the June 20-25 1949 meetings of the ACS were also preceded by a conference of field researchers. Dr. W. E. Garrison was headliner at the ACS, presenting six lectures on the "Implications of the Amsterdam Covenant." Three men (Burr, Jennings, and Bowen) were named to the Planning Committee, and Burr was made chairman of the ACS panel on the NCC. As Burr put it, "Double representation (was) not yet fully understood (and) indirect representation (was) not entirely familiar or as yet entirely acceptable." The United Church Women were urged to join the NCC.

Organizations paying ACS dues numbered 96; individuals, 194. A June 21 balance of \$2,434.61 was reduced to \$1,349.65 by June 30. A budget of \$2,000 was referred to the Executive Committee. The final attendance total was 218, of whom 36 were visitors. Scores of absentees had paid dues. Dr. Gertrude L. Apel of Seattle was elected president; Dr. G. Merrill Lenox of Detroit program chairman.

June 19 to 24, 1950, the ACS was led by Dr. Glenn W. Moore in the consideration of "Upbuilding the Body of Christ through Co-operation," while Dr. Roswell P. Barnes presented "Church and State—the Real Issues." Receipts from 101 organizations had amounted to \$1,663.35 (38 organizations did not pay); from 214 individuals, \$534.00. Including the previous balance, total receipts had amounted to \$3,576.16, expenses to \$2,083.21; there was thus a July 1 balance of \$1,492.95. A total attendance of 225 was recorded, with a detailed roll and mail addresses; 78 of these were guests or visitors. Among professionals, city and local leaders numbered 99; national, 50; state, 15. There were 23 regrets and cancellations, while 59 not present paid dues. A 1950-51 budget of \$2,100 was approved. A 27-page primer was provided for new council secretaries. Ten regular and ten alternate representatives to the NCC were nominated; also seven persons, with alternates, to the Central Department of Field Administration, and

five to the Central Department of Research and Survey. The 1951 Boston University summer course was commended. A resolution regarding principles of relationships for city, state, and national interdenominational agencies was referred to the Central Department of Field Administration for action. Lists of directors of Christian education and of social welfare were to be checked, with a view to widening the invitation to ACS sessions. A Social Welfare Group passed significant resolutions. Hugh C. Burr of Rochester was elected president; and Forrest C. Weir of Atlanta program chairman. Both were included among those named to the Central Department of Field Administration. In the September 1950 *Bulletin* Dr. Miller had a page and a half about this ACS meeting, entitled "Fellowship of Kindred Minds."

Consolidation Accelerates

Like World War I, World War II only tardily involved America. Hitler had lit a match to the world in 1939, and the conflagration was not to be put out until 1945; but for two years we seemed not to be involved as active combatants. But at the end of 1941 the Inter-Council Field Staff noted that "the shadows of war darken the horizon of 1942."

Just as a "chief positive result of the war was the formation of the United Nations,"⁸ so the cooperative unifications of the denominations, at least as difficult a matter, already begun, was to be accelerated by international happenings. Depression and war—both world-wide—were making it crystal clear that a parochial or sectarian type of organized religion was outmoded on our shrinking planet. The necessities of cultural change were fuel for the fires of ecumenical zeal. Therefore, when an Inter-Council Committee on Closer Relationships met on April 18, 1941, the world situation re-enforced the overtures already made, denominationally and interdenominationally. To prophetic minds and spiritual insight the meaning of the world drama was clear, but now a whole series of ecclesiastical chores must be patiently accomplished.

At Atlantic City on December 8, 1941, the day after Pearl Harbor, a conference of delegations from eight national interdenominational agencies⁹ "came to the clear conviction that closer cooperation is essential to the ecumenical movement in America." On the 9th, 10th, and 11th, under the chairmanship of Dean Luther A. Weigle of Yale, with Dr. Hermann N. Morse, as secretary, the Atlantic City Conference on Closer Relationships of General Interdenominational Agencies moved toward a more inclusive cooperative organization. "The Conference began its sessions on Tuesday, December 9, at a moment when the nations, through the declaration of war, had been welded

into a visible unity by a great national emergency.”¹⁰ The ACS was here represented by seven state and local men; and Rochester’s “Hugh Burr made an eloquent plea for a recognition of the necessity for the unification of interdenominational service nationally in order to meet more adequately the needs emerging in the local community.”

The Committee on Further Procedures, with the same officers, now took up, to carry through to its completion in less than a decade, the ecclesiastical portion of the task that the Federal Council’s Commission on Federated Movements had dimly glimpsed a quarter of a century earlier, and that the Federal Council had shelved until it could establish stronger beach-heads in the community life of the nation. This new committee convened on April 12, 1943; on July 1 it issued a printed report (revised April 25, 1944). By early 1944 the religious and secular press were able to report actions favorable to the merger of the national interdenominational bodies. Throughout the decade the consolidation of the interdenominational agencies in the nation was to proceed steadily, with a long record of tactical detail to implement an increasingly determined ecumenical strategy. As one of many aspects of this process, the ACS executive committee, as well as the entire ACS, would give increasing attention to the question of relationships, particularly of state and local councils to the emerging National Council.

Conciliar Experiments in Cooperative Churchmanship

For times like these the Council movement felt itself to be providential. February 10, 1941, at a fellowship dinner in Chicago, attended by 69 members of the ACS, as specific purposes for 1941 “it was proposed (1) to cement finally into one fellowship the professional religious education and the general interdenominational field workers of America; and (2) to achieve a sense of direction for the future and to make progress in clarifying the purpose and function of the new association.” A revised statement for the 1941 ACS meeting included a definition of “The central purpose (of the ACS) to be progressively realized: to achieve a functional unity in the development and projection of a comprehensive strategy for Protestant or non-Roman Catholic Christianity in America. To this end, the annual meeting of the ACS should at once be the occasion when a two-way clearance is made between national agencies and the secretaries regarding program and promotional plans for the ensuing year; and ultimately, it should be the occasion for the expression of as much unity among city, state, national, and international agencies as may progressively develop.”¹¹ “The Intercouncil Field Department should be asked to assume definite

responsibility in cooperation with the program committee for the ACS's summer conference; and the staff of the ICFD should be asked to provide executive leadership."¹² "The program shall have the proper balance between two types of consideration: (1) the more or less fundamental long-range problems, and (2) the more immediately practical and operative problems."¹³

Clearly the ACS felt itself to be important in the evolving ecumenical process, was seeking to arrive at self-conscious participation in it, but was aware of its limitations as a professional group without its own administrative status or executive leadership. Beggars could not always be choosers. Hence the constant interplay that was to develop between the ICFD staff, the ICFD itself, and the ACS. Increasingly the votes and the financial support were to be denominational, at every level. How the servants of the interdenominational agencies at the state and local levels were to be related to the national organization, already in process of formation, was to remain a question even until now. Meanwhile the separate national agencies still needed to make their several plans for field work, and maintain their own structures for consultative purposes.

During this decade the ICRE Committee on Field Program continued to function, usually meeting twice each year, with attendance ranging from five to twenty-two persons varying according to the location of the sessions and averaging a dozen members. Nearly 30 people showed an interest in this committee's work. Careful minutes were kept, and annual reports made to the Education Commission. Many working documents were considered, covering such interests as the viewpoints, policies, procedures, and organizational structures of the cooperating denominations, the tasks of the field executives in religious education, the particular field objectives and functions of the ICRE, how to organize county councils of religious education, the united field approach on the part of the associated national agencies (in preview, practice, and retrospect), and their growing unity as exemplified in the ICFD.

On February 13, 1941, at the meeting of the ICRE Committee on Field Program, 22 persons considered and rejected a regional staff plan for the ICRE alone, favored regional experimentation in the upper Mississippi Valley, talked about the more adequate denominational financing of state councils, and authorized cooperation with the ICFD for an additional year. In March "Christian Education in Unified Councils" was approved for experimental use, and a study of city councils approved for report to the ACS.

On the other hand, the Federal Council seems not to have held separate sessions of its Department of Field Administration, but to have deliberately concentrated on making the ICFD an increasingly effective instrument for unifying the field approach of all the merging national agencies. The Federal Council seems to have regarded its field service as "largely coterminous with the ICFD," and even its 1940 report had pointed out that "most of the field services of the (Federal) Council (had) been conducted in partnership with the seven national interdenominational organizations which (had) authorized the formation of the ICFD" in 1939.

The resources of the Federal Council's Department of Field Administration, and its responsibilities, greatly increased during this decade. Its budget, which was only \$10,000 in 1940, had become \$17,500 by 1948, in its general fund alone. Receipts from individuals, organizations, and denominations for the general fund ranged from less than \$2,000 in 1940 to a high of nearly \$8,000. They totaled nearly \$51,000 in eleven years, but covered only 30.5 percent of the Department's regular budget. If there is to be fiddling in the field, somebody must pay the fiddler.

The cumulative thinking of the ICRE is shown by two editorials in the *Journal*. In April 1942 it was reported that "The Council wholeheartedly endorsed the proposed plan looking to closer relationships with seven other interchurch agencies. . . . If these plans are finally completed, there will be one general interdenominational body representing the united work of the Protestant churches in America." A year later it was said that 1942 "will be known as the year when the ICRE committed itself officially to the general direction being worked out for bringing together into one agency the eight separate national interchurch agencies in the country . . . after several years of most earnest consideration."

Church Women Build Their Divisional Unit in the Coming NCC

The saga of the Protestant woman in America now moved to a long-awaited climax. On December 11-13, 1941, at an Atlantic City constituting convention, "after three days of frank and amazingly friendly discussions there emerged a plan and outline of program for the United Council of Church Women which was to further the work of the National Council of Church Women and to continue the established relationships with the FMC and HMC, and to be a channel for the power of 10,000,000 Protestant Women working together on a local, state, and national level to do those things that no single denominational group of women can do alone." "It seeks to establish

a local council of church women in every community. It sponsors the World Day of Prayer on the first Friday of Lent, May Fellowship Day on the first Friday in May, and World Community Day on the first Friday in November. It seeks to inspire Christian women in all communities to study the non-Christian forces of these communities and to oppose them by all means in their power; it seeks to cooperate with the national and foreign mission agencies in further programs of world evangelization." Its purpose, according to its constitution, is "to unite women in their allegiance to their Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, through a program looking to their integration in the total life and work of the church and to the building of the world community."

This brief chapter can only hint at the rich development of co-operating work among church women, under this new national setup, during the balance of this cumulative decade.¹⁴ In 1942 Mrs. Ruth Mougey Worrell began her six years as UCCW executive secretary. "Her vision, enthusiasm, great devotion, and hard work are largely responsible for (its) rapid growth." In 1943 state council presidents were made members of the UCCW Board. In 1945 the UCCW asked 25 councils to study segregation in their own areas. In 1946 it pledged support of the "Study of Life and Work of Women in the Churches," undertaken by the World Council of Churches, and aid in the dissemination of the results of the study. The 1946 UCCW National Assembly, with the theme, "Until We All Attain unto the Unity of Faith," according to one masculine observer in attendance throughout, marked "the definite emergence of maximum inclusiveness of women's work in the Church—Ladies' Aid, Missionary Society, Temperance Society, Bible classes, Study Groups, Peace Committee, Race Relations, Social Action, Christian Family Life, etc., all welded into one inclusive program as wide as the planet."

In 1948, Mrs. William Murdoch MacLeod became UCCW executive secretary. In 1949 state councils were asked to add a committee to promote world missions; and the forming of an Inter-Faith Committee was recommended to local councils. "After much prayer and careful evaluation," by a vote of 75 to 3 the UCCW Board decided "that the UCCW join with the other national interdenominational organizations in constituting the NCCCUSA," in which it became, in 1950, the General Department of United Church Women. This lay woman's movement has worked through state councils to expand a fellowship carrying a unified program among church women, based on the combined strength of women in each local church. Its meetings have always been without discrimination of race or color. In 1941 there were recog-

nized state and local councils of church women in 17 states; ¹⁵ by 1950 church women were organized interdenominationally in all 48 states, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia.

"Inter-Council" Paves the Way for the National Council

The ICFD met semiannually throughout the decade, except in 1943, 1945, and 1946, when only one session was held. Scores of people were vitally interested in the work of this interagency group. The ICFD staff held additional sessions, from one to five times a year.

While the Committee on Further Procedures, gradually transformed into a Planning Committee for the NCC, was building the structure of the new inclusive nation-wide interdenominational agency, the ICFD was a prolonged clinic in program planning, clearance, and appraisal. It built up an invaluable fund of experience in the complexities and relationships involved in doing the field job that the National Council was to inherit from its multiple parentage. What happened under the auspices of the ICFD during the decade before 1950 was to prove most determinative not only nationally, but specially to the state and local interdenominational agencies. The one place where local and state council work could be seen even more continuously than at the ACS was the ICFD. In October 1941 the Vieth Appraisal Committee Report on the ICFD assured the continuance of this fruitful experiment, which was regarded as a step in the right direction, but only a step: "Even though efforts for possible closer relations were being made by a committee of representatives of member organizations, this Department represents a necessary intermediate step, and the best preparation for closer relationships when effected."

By 1942 a first inter-agency *Plan Book* was being discussed. So were such topics as "Wartime Necessities" and "Brotherhood and Christian Unity." At the spring ICFD session Dr. Morse gave searching answers to the question, "What are the implications in the Atlantic City Study Conference for the work of the Department?" He regarded the current cooperative approach in the field as entirely too feeble. At the October ICFD meeting it was reported that the ACS had thoroughly considered the proposed (1943-4) *Plan Book*, which was duly issued early in 1943, thanks to the careful work of Miss Sue Weddell of the FMC and Gilbert LeSourd of the MEM.

By early 1943 the staff found that the quantity of program events made it "somewhat difficult to encompass in one (consolidated) report . . . all that is happening." But what Dr. Miller and Mr. Ketcham took turns in summarizing—especially by way of state and local situations—

provides valuable data on the development of specific councils, as well as of the total field.¹⁶ At first the eclectic process of endeavoring to use the materials tardily reported by the constituent national agencies, and put together at the last minute for ICFD scrutiny, resulted in considerable duplication. Gradually the unity of the task resulted in earlier and more unified and orderly reporting, and less repetitive, according to editorial processes forged out on the anvil of cooperative experience.

Japanese resettlement was now a major consideration. A "Unified Field Approach" was considered necessary in the interest of "Community Building in Wartime." Attention was accordingly given to interdenominational field services, especially those of a wartime nature; industrial defense centers; and wartime communities. The ICFD as a whole seems not to have met between March 1943 and December 1944.

During these months and years the origin and referral of various proposals and procedures, from the ICFD to the separate national agencies, to the ACS, and back again to the ICFD and its staff, seem cumbersome and complicated. But all this was educative and unifying; and it provided a foretaste of the complexity of "channels" that were bound to develop in any federal movement in a nation as large as ours. Cooperative churchmanship was necessarily much more like the national government, or some huge business corporation, than many of us were at first willing to admit; and more so than many may still be able to perceive. When the ecclesiastical process has once become institutionalized, it is hard to avoid "institutionalism." Perhaps the Church should not try to do so, but only seek to determine the nature of its institutional acts and attitudes.

In October 1943 the ICFD discussed a proposed study of the financing of state and local councils, but referred any action on this matter to the ACS executive committee. Here would seem to be important beginnings of a demand for services now represented so ably in the important financial studies made in recent years by W. P. Buckwalter, Jr.

By the autumn of 1944 expanding programs and budgets were the order of the day in state and local councils. Manuscripts for the first four Church Cooperation pamphlets were up for approval. In December 1944 the ICFD held its first meeting in 21 months. State-wide program planning conferences, using the new *Plan Book*, had been held in Iowa, Maine, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. The process of literature production was formalized,

the Church Cooperation Series reviewed. "The Philosophy of Church Cooperation" was further discussed by E. C. Farnham, H. N. Morse, and Harry C. Munro, secretary of the ACS Committee on Philosophy. A long list of local and state council staff changes was submitted at most of these ICFD meetings. The service of Dr. Worth M. Tippy as interim secretary at Springfield, Mass., after similarly acceptable earlier service in Washington, D.C., suggested the question, "Should the ICFD have a staff man available as a pinch hitter in local situations?" In connection with "A Look Ahead," cooperative field research, which had seemed a possibility toward the end of 1941, was now looming as a major opportunity. Of course there was continuous discussion of "Relations—City, State, and National."

At the April 1945 ICFD meeting Dr. Miller presented an up-to-date map of the councils throughout the nation. A new *Directory* was also available. Hugh C. Burr's challenging paper on "Next Steps in Field Organization and Strategy," with contemplated staff enlargement, was referred to the staff. Philosophy was again discussed, but no action taken. At the October 1945 ICFD meeting, after discussion at the ACS, the first steps were taken toward the writing of this history.

A special meeting of the ICFD staff, March 8, 1946, was held, chiefly to consider the proposed southeastern office at Atlanta. Miss Weddell was now to work on the second *Plan Book*. How to continue the *ACS News Letter*, eight issues of which had appeared during the three previous years, was referred to the executive committee. The amount of new personnel and the difficulty in assembling the membership led to the question, "Is the ICFD bogging down?" On the other hand, staff attention was given to five pages of "What's New in the ICFD?" and this material was to be further considered by the ACS.

There appears to have been no meeting of the ICFD between April 1945 and October 1946; but three staff meetings were now reported. By way of suggestion, the ICFD now "Resolved that the ACS petition the eight national interdenominational agencies to take affirmative action at the earliest possible moment concerning the merger to form the National Council of Churches as being highly important to the success of ecumenical relationships on the local level." When "Personnel Service" was carefully reported, those most responsible for it regretted to have to call current procedure inadequate. The number of staff changes was becoming very great. In 1943 new staff appointments had numbered 33; in 1944 they had increased to 62; and in 1945 to 71.

Dr. Wynn C. Fairfield presented a significant paper on "World Christian Fellowship Related to State and Local Councils of Churches." "Foreign" was becoming irrelevant to the local domestic field. Again, at the April 1947 ICFD meeting Dr. Fairfield presented an "Advance Program in Foreign Missions." A number of simultaneous committee sessions considered various phases of the Department's work. The southeastern office was now a reality, and a southwestern office at Dallas was proposed. The Committee for Co-operative Field Research was also a going concern. At the previous meeting Dr. Mark A. Dawber (HMC) indicated that for some time there had been deep concern for a better understanding of the relationships among national, state, and local councils. At this April 1947 session a special committee found itself in substantial agreement with the summary report, "A Study of Principles, Policies, and Procedures Governing the Relationships of Local (City and County), State, and National Interdenominational Councils."

By October 1947 the ACS had requested help from the ICFD in its procedures. Favorable action as to "An Integrated Protestant Strategy for America" was proposed, but referred to a committee of five. Personnel service and a possible statistical summary were considered. In recognition of the latter need a committee was appointed to study possibilities. Field aspects of national agency work and relationships (including those of the YMCA to councils of churches) were discussed. It was recommended that community churches be given a consultative status in state councils.

In April 1948, in reporting to the ICFD replies from 13 communions to six questions concerning joint planning, Dr. Earl F. Adams stated that the situation as regards a Protestant strategy for America was, if anything, more baffling than four years earlier. But progress was noted, and joint planning continued. An important Supreme Court decision as to "released time" was considered. It was felt that the national agencies should everywhere work through the councils in the field. A study of YMCA relationships was based on 75 reports. A Committee on State-National Relationships and Representation was to report to the Committee on Further Procedure. Tentative suggestions for coordinated program, 1948-1952, were considered.

The October 1948 ICFD meeting, while gratified at the 2,200 registrations at the Columbus Assembly of the Foreign Missions Conference, was told by its Committee on a More Integrated Protestant Strategy that it had been able to make little progress. This confusion,

however, served only to underscore the need for the National Council of Churches. A conference on a more integrated strategy was authorized. There was now significant cooperation with Church World Service to Displaced Persons.

By April 1949 a committee to study and report on the need of a statistical survey of council financing was authorized; but later in the year the staff decided that it did not then have the resources or facilities to carry on this project.

In holding certain "Little Assemblies" throughout the nation, the FMC had found that there were marked advantages in working through denominational channels in the promotional process at the community level, but that council channels could not be neglected. This was a phase of field activity that had to be learned over and over again. Each new national program emphasis was inclined to ignore the state and local interdenominational structures already existing, and proceed too exclusively through the more familiar denominational channels. On the other hand, some felt that the earlier post-Madras meetings had inadequately utilized denominational resources, while others failed to realize the significance of the partnership of the councils in those gatherings. It was voted to convene a group of denominational leaders to explore further the whole matter of denominational emphases, in relation to a more integrated strategy.

A small committee was authorized to cooperate with the Planning Committee of the National Council in the drafting of by-laws or an operating procedure that would replace the document "Functions and Procedures" of the ICFD.

In October 1949, the proposed by-laws of the new National Council Central Department of Field Administration were considered. Some concern was expressed as to a seeming loss of 33 local and state councils, and the reversion of others from a paid-staff to a volunteer-service basis. A small committee, of which Wilbur C. Parry was later made chairman, was authorized to study procedures for an all-inclusive strategy of developing councils with respect to national sociological groupings. The staff now began to feel that there was need for a more comprehensive pamphlet on the program of a council of churches, and a committee was authorized. The task proved considerable, and required more time than may have been at first realized.

By April 1950 the NCC field budget was up for consideration. A wise paper by Wilbur C. Parry on "Developing Councils of Churches" was referred to a committee for study and revision, possible con-

sideration at ACS, and report back to the ICFD. It was clear that "The value of the work of the present ICFD and much of the work of the new NCCCUSA is dependent on the development of strong councils of churches on both the state and local levels. Councils of churches basically incorporate two elements that, at least in the present church structure, are not found elsewhere. 1. The focus of their concern is the advancement of the Christian experience throughout the entire life of the community. 2. They offer a means by which both clergy and laity (men, women, and young people) come together to face effectively the task of reaching every person with the Christian message. If state and local councils of churches are essential to a complete program of Christian service to the entire life of the community, it is important that the national interchurch agencies perfect a strategy for their further development. They are too important to be allowed to spring up because of the momentary enthusiasm of one or two persons, and possibly die either because of the moving away of those individuals or the failure of those same well-meaning persons to secure the cooperation of others, who would have helped to guarantee broader service and continued existence" on the part of the particular council.

The need for certain specialized national service was suggested: financing, organization and relationships, and counseling with national leaders of the communions.

The ICFD now began to categorize cities and their councils according to population size. The Boston University Summer School on Ecumenical Administration won the joint sponsorship of the ICFD.

At its last session, in October 1950, nominations of state and city council representatives to the NCC were approved for proper presentation, after consultation with the ACS.

Church Cooperation Expands Rapidly

Just how many state and local councils were involved in the field contacts and outreach of the national agencies?

In 1941 there were a total of 247 local and state organizations:

62 state (CC, CRE, HMC, or SSA).

98 city and county councils or associations with paid leadership.

87 city and county, on a volunteer basis.¹⁷

Beginning about 1942, the directory of state and local councils became more inclusive than before, as a result of more accurate reporting and the assistance of state council offices. A number of councils

of religious education devoted chiefly to week-day instruction, and a few larger parishes were now included. The later figures are therefore not strictly comparable with some of the earlier listings. A temporary falling off in the reported number of councils with paid staff, during 1948 and 1949, with signs of recovery in 1950, was a cause for some concern; it suggests that some volunteer organizations may have undertaken to employ staff prematurely. Yet the growth in numbers of councils of churches of all sorts during the decade was remarkable:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Councils of Chs. and of R.E.</i>			<i>Ministerial Associations</i>	<i>Councils (c) of Ch. Women</i>
	<i>Pd.Staff</i>	<i>Volunteer</i>	<i>Total</i>		
1942	108	162	270	1,400	
1944	127	243 (a)	370	2,176 (b)	1,441
1946	196	439	370		
1947	257	420	677	2,100	1,513
1948	227	485	712	1,775	
1949	214	624	838		
1950	222	699	921	1,827	1,764

(a) 239 in Federal Council annual report.

(b) Only 1,600 in January; the larger figure seems inflated.

(c) Includes state and district councils: 51 in 1946; 51 in 1950.

Bower and Hayward reported only seven fully merged state councils in 1938, five expanded councils of religious education, three states with parallel organizations but common staff, and six with only councils of religious education.¹⁸ The number of inclusive state councils in 1941 was 22,¹⁹ while ten additional states had both councils of churches and councils of religious education; two states had only councils of religious education, and five only Sunday school associations. In 1950, there were forty states with inclusive councils, while only Pennsylvania reported two statewide organizations. This increase in state councils was due both to the multiple thrust of various national agencies and to their cooperation in the field. The HMC had done yeoman's work in earlier years. The UCCW was blanketing the nation. Two men in particular pioneered together. Rev. John B. Ketcham (affectionately called "Jack"), elected to ICRE Field Administration in 1937, was first associated with Dr. Knapp; Dr. Miller ("Quinter") joined the FC staff in 1938. At the end of their first decade both could rejoice that the number of state councils of all types had increased by more than half.

In 1942 there were reportedly 270 men and women employed in local and state councils. State and local budgets had increased from

a reported total of \$1,800,000 in 1941 to \$6,100,000 in 1946. From any angle, this was a decade of phenomenal increase in state and local cooperation. Between 1942 and 1950 the number of volunteer state and local councils increased by 331 percent. Among the 699 volunteer local organizations reported in 1950, there were 55 Sunday School Associations, 79 Councils of Religious Education, and 565 Councils of Churches. The total number of state and local organizations increased by 241 percent. Councils with paid staff increased relatively slowly, by only 96 percent; but this appears to have been solid growth, maintained after a tendency to overexpand had spent itself. There had been only 44 inclusive local councils with paid staff in 1941, with both councils of churches and councils of religious education in five additional cities. In addition to 46 local councils of religious education, six Sunday School Associations, and half a dozen larger parishes reported in 1950, there were (counting the four Divisions of the Protestant Council of New York City separately) 121 inclusive local councils with paid staff.

It was this growth at the grassroots that had enabled the ACS to grow correspondingly. The expansion in its resources can easily be indicated:

	<i>Persons Paying ACS Dues</i>	<i>Organizations Contributing</i>	<i>Income ex- cluding pre- vious balances</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>
1941	119	43	\$ 435.78	\$ 607.31	\$ 252.59
1950	214	101	2,207.35	2,083.21	1,492.95

Accordingly, with five times the income that it had at the beginning of the decade, and nearly six times the balance—because of a great increase in dues paying members and more than double the number of organizational gifts—the ACS found no difficulty in expanding its budget to \$2,100 for 1951. Similarly, attendance at the ACS had reached a new high in 1944, when 89 were present; but the figures for the last three years of the decade show how great had been the growth in number and interest:

<i>Year</i>	<i>ACS Attendance</i>
1948	168
1949	218
1950	225

In a single decade attendance had more than quadrupled.

State and Local Straws in the Ecumenical Wind

We have noted that the ICFD staff found it very difficult to summarize the field situation semiannually. At the ACS meetings the combined national staffs also soon discovered how hard it was to tell "What's New Nationally" in one evening. Fortunately, in state and local council house organs one finds "Ecumenicity Made Local," to quote a *FC Bulletin* editorial. Moreover, for years the *Journal* and the *Bulletin* featured "What's Happening" and "News of State and Local Cooperation." An article by Charles P. Taft found the "Growth of State Councils an Encouraging Sign."²⁰ Typical details, as listed in the *Bulletin* and in the *Journal*, include items like these:

1940. The *Kansas* Council of Religious Education and Council of Churches first appointed a joint committee, then voted to combine under one secretary, Sept. 1, 1940; and effected a merger in 1942.

1941. *Colorado* began studying a plan of merger, but did not unite its forces until 1950. There was close cooperation among three bodies (Church Federation, Council of Religious Education, and United Church Women) in *Minnesota*. *North Dakota* projected an integrated program; in 1945 it merged its Superintendents' Council with its Council of Religious Education, but did not have a fully united council until 1949. *Oklahoma's* Council of Religious Education voted to expand, and become an inclusive council in 1942. *South Dakota* leaders organized an inclusive council to be operative "when five denominations and twelve counties approved"; merger plans were completed early in 1943.

1942. *Arizona* had a new inclusive council. *Denver's* Council of Religious Education, Ministerial Association, and Council of Churches merged, with Harold M. Gilmore as first executive.

1943. *Indiana* began its inclusive organization, partly as an outgrowth of its annual Pastors' Conferences. The *South Carolina* Fellowship of Churches was organized. *West Virginia* also began its inclusive council. *New York City* organized its interborough Protestant Council, for a time including the Welfare Council, but without the Queens Federation. *New Jersey* considered a merger, moved forward in 1944 and 1945, but seems not to have fully effected it until 1947.

1944. *Iowa* began its reorganization; the *Montana* Council was revived. The *Virginia* Church Council then included the Council of Religious Education. *New York State* completely liquidated its \$22,000 debt.

1945. *New Hampshire's* Council of Religious Education was expanded, and merged with the Council of Churches. Charles P. McGregor had served the former 21 years; Whitney S. K. Yeaple succeeded him January 1, 1946.

1946. *Pennsylvania* which had continued to maintain two councils, now experimented with one executive and an interrelated staff and a common headquarters building.

1947. *Minnesota's* Federation of Churches had ceased to function in 1944, and its Council of Religious Education became inclusive.

1948. "*Oregon Council Takes New Life.*" "*Progress in Maine.*" *Kentucky* organized.

1949. *Florida* and *Utah* organized.

Local inclusive councils were established in Fort Wayne, Ind. (1941); Portland, Me., Albany, N.Y., and Memphis, Tenn. (1942); Pittsburgh (1944, one stage); Philadelphia (1945); Honolulu, T.H., and Miami, Fla. (1946), and Dallas, Tex. (1949)—to pick only a few samples.²¹ An Association of Christian Churches antedated by a decade the Council of Churches of Greater Houston, which was organized in 1950 with representatives from 52 churches of 12 denominations. Washington, D.C., was also studying reorganization.

The St. Louis Church Federation, for which a portion of the YMCA building was set aside by a generous donor, is now (1960) considering a *building* of its own. Illinois dedicated its headquarters in 1941, Buffalo was given its property in 1942. In 1960 there are 30 or more council buildings, some of which include one or more denominational offices, and some have living quarters for their staff leadership. Councils are increasingly making provision for the housing of their executive personnel.

Progress in *Social Service* is marked by such additional staff appointments as those of John L. Mixon in Los Angeles, 1942, after pioneering in Washington, D.C.; Virgil E. Lowder in Chicago, 1943; Dale Dargitz in Buffalo 1946, and Denver 1949. Here is a whole story in itself. Truly, the churches "Need More Trained Leaders in Social Work."²²

Other examples of program progress, and a steady stream of staff changes, weaving a constantly changing personnel pattern, are recorded from month to month in the columns of the *Bulletin* and *Journal*. Two-thirds of the issues of these magazines yielded significant notes for the compilation of this history—sometimes as many as ten items in a

single issue.²³ While interested in the unique and relatively spectacular, these publications gave large stress to local situations in general. The emphasis on "A Common Strategy in the Local Community," stressed by Dr. Cavert's 1946 FC biennial report,²⁴ continued throughout 1947 in *Bulletin* articles, and the *Journal* gave equal or greater attention to this theme.

World Council Consummated

Toward the end of this decade, at Amsterdam in 1948, after an astoundingly useful prenatal career of world helpfulness, the World Council of Churches, in process of formation for more than a decade (London, 1937; Utrecht, 1938), had become a fully organized reality. Its very existence—though less inclusive than the all-out "closer cooperation" involved in American "closer relationships"—helped to create an atmosphere favorable to interchurch cooperation at every level, everywhere.²⁵

The whole religious press was now to make increasingly frequent and generous reference to the ecumenical movement. The baffling 1920's and the merging 1930's had now fully given way to the ecclesiastically expectant 1940's. An October 1948 *Bulletin* editorial traced the encouraging story from the organization of the FC at Philadelphia in 1908, to Amsterdam 1948, when the WCC, first organized as a provisional body ten years earlier, had then been fully established. Said Bishop Oxnam, "I doubt we could have had the WCC without these forty years of FC history."²⁶

Great Expectations Fulfilled

A foreword to the final report of the Federal Council rejoiced that "the inauguration of the NC will be the consummation of a decade of effort to bring a more effective unity among the American churches." (Not until late 1949 did the UCCW ratify the proposed NCC; and only in early 1950 did the FMC decide to do so.) Looking back 50 years to 1900 and the organization of the National Federation of Churches, or to 1910 and the Edinburgh Convention, or to the 1937 beginnings of Life and Work and of Faith and Order, a lot of water had run under the bridge. Some of the same forces that had finally brought about the organization of the World Council of Churches had led up to the functionally even more inclusive National Council, which was duly constituted at a convention beginning November 29, 1950, at Cleveland, Ohio. Of course "a whole network of non-

American forces were at work in relation to the World Council, while only American forces were involved in the National."²⁷

The details of the establishment of this unique and powerful ecumenical body need not here concern us; they are too well-known, too recent, and too obvious in their significance, to require rehearsal in this connection. One wonders if the tremendous growth of local and state councils prior to 1950 was an effect or a cause of the national integration of American interdenominational cooperation? Only at one point was the NCC to be less articulately ecumenical, less broadly representative than the WCC: it included at the outset no formal recognition of "Faith and Order." On the other hand, the WCC was still paralleled by a World Council of Christian Education and by the International Missionary Council. In practical terms, the NCCCUSA represented an attainment in cooperative organization as inclusive as any yet achieved on the planet.

For, like it or not, the horizon of American life, and of its churches, had now become the whole inhabited earth. As C. Howard Hopkins put it,²⁸ "The decade of the Second World War and its undeclared continuation not only ushered in the atomic age but compressed within its short span the most momentous events of modern history. . . . Disruption of normal life was felt throughout the length and breadth of America. The turmoil following World War II, prolonged by the cold war, was marked by economic readjustment, moral laxity, political corruption, spy-hunting, religious uncertainty, and the rise of militarism." Over against all this, however, loomed "new heights of prosperity." Therefore, while it might naturally be said that the tremendously expectant 1940's would lead into fearsome 1950's, as a matter of actual fact the year 1950 was the beginning of a great new ecumenical impetus, and marked the start of still greater state and local cooperation in American Protestantism.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter VII

- ¹ *FC Bulletin*, September, 1942.
- ² *Cf.* September, 1942, *FC Bulletin*, "Councils Active in War Service"; also October, 1942, H. Paul Douglass, "The War Emergency and Co-operative Unity"; also, *ibid.*, "The Churches and Defense Communities" and "Wartime Trends."
- ³ Albert B. Denton of Youngstown, and O. M. Walton, then of Cleveland, were named to the ICRE and FC, respectively.
- ⁴ Vol. IX, No. 4.
- ⁵ *International Journal*, September, 1946, "ACS Has Inspiring Meeting."
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ *International Journal*, September, 1948 (nearly a full page); there were present 100 state and local executives from 27 states, D.C. and T.H., to consider a Protestant strategy in Christian education.
- ⁸ *The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, p. 1379.
- ⁹ The ACS had four special representatives present, in addition to one city executive on the FC delegation.
- ¹⁰ *FC Bulletin*, January 1942.
- ¹¹ Expansion of Paragraph 6 of "General Purposes for the Years Ahead," supplement to ACS 1941 Minutes, "for discussion only."
- ¹² *Ibid.*, item 10, under "Policy as to Specific Aspects of the Annual Program."
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, item 11.
- ¹⁴ For year-by-year details, 1942-1949, see Dr. Head's "Forward Together," cited in Chapter III. See also the *International Journal*, February, 1942, re the December 1941 organization of the UCCW; also November 1950, "Women's Work in the New NCC" by Mrs. W. Murdoch MacLeod: "Nine short years ago . . ."
- ¹⁵ Councils of Women in 23 states had been listed by the ICFD in March 1941.
- ¹⁶ Later Don F. Pielstick of the HMC and George D. Kelsey, Dr. Miller's Associate in the FC, took their turn at presenting the staff report.
- ¹⁷ *FC 1941 Report*, p. 13.
- ¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 193, 196.
- ¹⁹ ICFD Minutes, March 24, 25, 1941.
- ²⁰ *FC Bulletin*, December, 1947.
- ²¹ *Cf.* also *FC Bulletin*, January, 1948: 2 columns on the newly organized council in Mifflinsburg, Pa., a town of 2,000; and September 1948, a page on the Queens Federation.
- ²² *FC Bulletin*, May 1948, editorial.
- ²³ Additional memoranda, not cited in this volume, have been preserved in summary in the Research Notes, filed with the Office for Councils of Churches.
- ²⁴ *FC 1946 Report*, p. 14.
- ²⁵ *FC Bulletin*, January, 1948, call to the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches, to be held in Amsterdam in August.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, January, 1949.
- ²⁷ S. M. Cavert, letter cited. On the other hand, Cate (see Ch. X, note 10) says, "The Federal Council of Churches . . . set the pattern for national, state, and local organizations, plus giving the general pattern for the World Council of Churches."
- ²⁸ "The History of the YMCA in North America," Assn. Press. 1951, p. 709.

Since 1950, Solid Growth

The Increasingly Ecumenical Atmosphere

With the organization of the National Council of Churches in 1950, many of the goals that had been sought specifically for more than a decade, and implicitly for half a century, had been reached. Interdenominational cooperation was now taken for granted, and the ecclesiastical climate was more favorable than ever before for the organization and maintenance of local and state councils of churches. As one careful writer¹ observes, "Whereas fifty years ago the churches in most communities tended to act unilaterally in all matters, now they usually take it for granted that there are certain functions they will perform in common." The decade now closing has therefore been a time of solid growth for cooperative churchmanship.

AN EXPANDING ENTERPRISE

More State and Local Councils, Especially with Paid Staff

The extent and nature of this growth will be shown if we can answer a few seemingly simple questions: How many councils, state and local, are there? What professional staff do they employ? Where are they located? How much income do they have? What are its chief sources? How are they associated? Just what do these councils do? This chapter seeks to suggest as accurate answers as possible to questions like these, and to show something of the trends since the organization of the National Council of Churches.

Number of State and Local Cooperative Church Organizations

Year	State	Local with paid executives	Volunteer Local Councils	Total Local Pd. & Vol.	Total State & Local
1951a	39	172	687b	849	898b
1959c	50	278	614	892	942

a—Nov. 1, 1951 Summary, *Mimeographed Directory of American Protestant Churches*.

b—Omitting certain larger parishes and exclusively WDRE organizations. With these, the total was 926.

c—OCC figures as of January 1, 1960.

Nine of the state councils (in eight states) are volunteer bodies, without paid executives: Alaska, Delaware, Nevada, New Mexico, South Carolina (Fellowship), southern Nevada, southwestern Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming.

California has two councils, northern and southern areas.

Pennsylvania has both a Council of Churches and a Council of Religious Education.

Thus there are councils with paid staff in 38 of the 50 states; and also in Puerto Rico. In several instances councils have served areas across state lines. The National Capital Area (Washington, D.C.) Council has state status in DCE, NCC. Arkansas now has a part-time executive, and Georgia has moved to a full-time basis. Delaware, long linked with Maryland, now has a volunteer council of its own.

Northern Idaho has been linked with Washington; southwestern Idaho now has its own volunteer council. Nevada, formerly served only by the California councils, now has two volunteer organizations of its own.

The number of volunteer councils was smaller in 1959 than in 1951, having temporarily increased meanwhile to 697 in 1955. On the other hand, with the exception of 1953, the number of local councils with paid executives increased 61.6 per cent in eight years. The percentage of local councils with paid staff increased from 20.0 in 1951 to 31.5 in 1959. Since 1952 the total number of state and local councils (not including separate women's organizations) has always exceeded 900; it reached a high of 960 in 1955.

At least thirty local councils—three or more in each of six states—moved from the 1951 volunteer list to the 1959 paid-staff list. A number of other states shifted one or two volunteer local councils to paid status during the same period. The trend is clear—the solid core of professionally staffed councils grows steadily larger.

A partial listing of state and local staff members in the 1959 *Year Book of American Churches* (including only "departmental heads" in the larger councils, and supervisors rather than all teachers in some week-day religious education systems) totaled 745:

<i>Councils</i>	<i>Professional Staff Members</i>	
	<i>Ministerial</i>	<i>Lay</i>
State	91	63
Local	257	334
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	348	397
		745

Probably the total of *executive* staff in 1959 was well over 900 persons, plus another five or six hundred secretaries and other office workers.

Only three mainland states in the deep south (Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi) now lack some sort of state-wide interchurch organization. In at least one of these "conversations are in progress" looking toward possible organization, in another there are already hopeful beginnings. *Councils of church women serve all the states.*

Outside the south the number of cities with a population of 100,000 or more without a council of churches is being steadily reduced to almost zero. The smaller cities and the redevelopment of county or area councils in more sparsely settled sections of the nation appear to provide the largest opportunity for extension.

Organizational Names

From year to year, forty or more titles appear in the roster of state and local bodies.² More than two dozen names have been tried and discontinued, and as many new ones added. But in recent years the ten most used titles account for 93 percent or more of the total number of organizations. Councils with various inclusive names now constitute three out of four of the total, and Councils of Churches seven out of ten. Councils of Christian or Religious Education tend first to take on the functions of Councils of Churches, and then to adopt the more inclusive name as well as program. The number of Sabbath or Sunday School Associations reported to the Office for Councils of Churches varies from year to year, as attitudes toward the National Council and response to its inquiries change.

Great Expansion of Co-Operation among Church Women (DUCW)

The progress of the United Church Women during the decade is easily measured. Whereas in 1951 "more than 1,800 local councils"³ of church women were known to national headquarters, in 1958 this number had increased in spite of much more rigorous standards of enrollment, to 2,135;⁴ and 25,325 local churches are involved. State councils of church women include representatives of from five (Alabama) to twenty-nine (D.C.) denominations. In all but five states, where there is a council of churches, the women function as a department of the larger body; and there are councils of church women in four additional states, where there is no state council of churches.⁵ By 1957 it was possible to list 41 state annual meetings,⁶ with dates

and places; the last three years 49 have been listed.⁷ At the Seventh Assembly of United Church Women in November 1955 46 states were represented;⁸ at a 1953 Board of Managers (DUCW) meeting⁹ presidents of 46 state councils of church women were in session together; and in a 1957 meeting 47 presidents gathered.¹⁰

The financial increase is even more striking. When the UCCW was organized its budget for the first year was \$12,000 ("what faith it took on the part of the finance committee to adopt this!"),¹¹ and actual expenditures in 1942 amounted to only \$9,600.¹² By 1954 expenditures were \$354,000;¹³ the 1955 budget (exclusive of the World Day of Prayer) was \$423,800. In 1958 the Department handled nearly \$800,000.

In 1952 it was reported that the last four national assemblies had adopted \$50,000 a year as "the financial share for state and local councils, to support (UCW) national work."¹⁴ Steady progress was made over the years, from \$39,352.92 in 1952 until 1958, when this high goal was actually passed.¹⁵ These figures are of course over and above an Ecumenical Register Fund of more than \$300,000,¹⁶ offerings received on the three great UCW days (\$450,000 in 1953),¹⁷ and other extras.

When the UCCW voted in 1949 to become a Department in the NCC, it recognized "the need for one co-operative agency in each state and local area." At the same time there were "organized councils of church women in state and local areas that came into being before there were councils of churches. Indeed, the councils of church women are frequently the only interdenominational co-operative agency in an area." In April 1954 important action was taken providing "Suggested Criteria for Organizational Participation of Church Women in State and Local Councils of Churches." These included objective study of possible patterns and mutual agreement in each situation, and provided for "autonomy in the operation (and financing) of distinctly United Church Women programs and projects," including a UCW annual meeting, to be held separately, in order to make possible larger participation on the part of church women in the annual meeting of the Council of Churches.¹⁸

EMPLOYED PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

In State Councils

In 1951 state councils in 34 states (two in Pennsylvania) and a Sunday School Association in Hawaii, reported a total of 128 em-

ployed executives, many of whom were undoubtedly part-time, and at least five of whom had double portfolios.

In 1959 professional staff positions,¹⁹ full- or part-time, reported by 41 state councils, numbered 166. The number of councils had increased 13.9 percent, their professional staff 29.7 percent, and the average staff 11.1 percent. In recent years the median state council has had a professional staff of six persons.

General executive, managerial, and finance leadership available per council have increased slightly, as have miscellaneous program positions. Range of program and competence of administration have gained. On the other hand, the number of state inter-denominational workers assigned to the field of religious education, especially in traditional age group specialization, has decreased. This decline is in part offset by denominational and local council increases in religious education personnel, and in part by the fact that many of the council senior executives, especially in the smaller organizations, are primarily concerned with the educational task of the churches, and are trained religious educators.

In Local Councils

In 1951 Virginia reported 39 local or county organizations engaged in week-day religious education.²⁰ Eleven of these had a staff executive, who in most instances was also a teacher. Some of these staff executives had from one to four teachers on their staff. The other 28 organizations employed from one to six teachers, making a total of 73 persons, or an average of nearly two per council. In a smaller proportion of councils in other states also the organization is essentially a teaching enterprise, without some of the staff problems common to the more inclusive councils.

Omitting this significant and pioneering Virginia development, the number of other local organizations (city and county) increased from 131 in 29 states, with 395 professional staff positions¹⁹ in 1951, to 215 in 34 states, with 551 professional tasks in 1959. Of senior executives, with seven different titles, more than seven out of ten are executive secretaries, and nearly two out of ten executive directors. Almost half of the employed personnel is engaged in some sort of administration. (The line between managerial and promotional tasks and purely clerical work seems not always to be clearly observed; but it is plain that there is an increase in administrative and business specialists.) The next largest group is the religious educators. In 41

councils from one to five chaplains, to a total of 75, are now employed. Social services, which are decidedly on the increase, engage more than 50 other persons. Radio and television directors number at least ten; nine staff persons serve local or state councils of church women; nine are research and planning specialists. The diversity of program undertaken by state and local councils is even greater than that of their employed personnel; a number of persons are employed at two or more unrelated tasks.

In 1951 more than one in three local councils reported a staff of three or more professional workers; a smaller proportion did so in 1959. On the other hand, in 1951 fewer than half of these councils reported only one executive; in 1959 nearly three out of five did so. Many newer councils report smaller staffs at the outset. While the average staff per council has declined, the base has been broadening, and the strong are growing stronger.

Geographical Distribution of Local Councils and Their Personnel

Most of the metropolitan centers are clustered in a small number of states. A considerable portion of the local councils with paid staff have been organized in these more urbanized areas. Of 84 new local councils with paid staff listed since 1951, nearly four-fifths are located in eleven states. In 1951 eleven states employed nearly two-thirds of the total local personnel; in 1959 this proportion had increased to three-fourths. The increase from 278 to 417 in local personnel in these eleven states was above average.

The total number of employed professional positions reported by local councils also definitely suggests the relative urbanization of the states in which they are located. In 1951 seven states reported 78 local councils with six or more professional staff members. In 1959 eleven states, including the 1951 seven, reported 162 councils with six or more professional employees. Local staff professionals in nine of these states now number a score or more: New York, 75; California, 67; Pennsylvania, 50; Ohio, 47; Illinois, 44; Massachusetts, 34; Indiana, 24; Michigan 23; Connecticut, 20.²¹

Increased Income

Like the National Council, local and state councils now have more dollars available, and from increasingly representative sources. The dollar volume of reported state and local business more than doubled in six years.²²

Gross Annual Income, State and Local Councils

<i>Year</i>	<i>Councils with Paid Staff</i>		<i>Volunteer</i>	
	<i>State</i>	<i>Local</i>	<i>Councils</i>	<i>Totals</i>
1952	\$1,316,726	\$3,936,232	\$848,870	\$6,101,828
1953	2,097,233	4,288,297	775,762	7,161,292
1954	2,508,886	4,517,117	831,531	7,857,534
1955	3,011,463	5,748,780	719,457	9,479,700
1956	3,401,441	6,561,674	785,382	10,748,497
1957	3,527,173	7,360,711	747,395	11,631,279
1958	3,869,172	8,357,216	812,479	13,038,867

The impressive annual financial total of National Council operations is now approximated by the total amount received and spent by state and local councils.

More rapid increase in state as compared with local council income is due chiefly to the development of state benevolences, which now amount to almost as much as current expenses. Local benevolent programs have involved smaller sums. Of the total received in 1958 by all state and local councils, one dollar in five was given for benevolent projects.

In 1958 councils with volunteer leadership reported smaller receipts than in 1952, but the average per council (\$1,328) was larger. (When volunteer councils are able to secure an income of four or five thousand dollars, they tend to shift at least to the part-time category. If several such changes occur in one year, the effect on the totals can be considerable.)

Increased Representativeness

During the last six years main sources of income have shown a decided trend toward member unit support. Half of state council income in 1957 came from denominations, local churches, local church organizations, and city and local councils, as compared with three-tenths in 1952. Local councils with paid staff received 23.3 percent from such sources in 1952, and 41.4 percent in 1957. Meanwhile the proportion of receipts from individuals showed a reverse trend: from 24.4 percent in 1952 to 13.6 percent in 1958 for state councils, and from 27.8 to 17.6 for local.

The larger the city, the more likely is the Council of Churches to receive designated funds for health and welfare work from such sources as Community Chests, to which are always added general

Council funds—in some cases approaching one-half of the cost of such programs. In 1957 councils in 14 cities of more than a million population received nearly a fourth of their current expense income from Chests and municipal funds, as compared with only a little more than a fifth for 15 councils with over \$100,000 income, and less than one dollar in nine for all local councils with paid leadership. By the same token, in 1957 the most metropolitan cities received the smallest fraction of their income from local church budgets—22.9 percent as compared with the 33.6 percent average for 200 councils with paid staff.

Program Expands, Education Still Central

Only a thorough analysis of the annual reports, the structures and the finances of state and local councils could adequately appraise their relative program emphases. There is abundant evidence, in personnel, activities, and budgets, that the range of tasks undertaken has greatly expanded. The range of program interests reported by state and local councils, as summarized in the last three ACS annual reports of "Significant Developments," is impressive; and some trends seem clear.

Education—including age and sex group activities, week-day released time, and campus ministries—continues to be central; but—perhaps because it is established and taken for granted—it occupies, at least temporarily, a proportionately smaller place in the summaries. Administrative concerns are sharply to the fore, including finance and stewardship, increased support, public relations, planning and strategy, better quarters, and larger staff. Ecumenical studies are on the increase. Social action and social welfare have zoomed into a new place of attention. Pastoral services and counselling, institutional ministries, including various types of chaplaincies, along with service to migrants and minority groups, missionary interest and evangelism, assume important proportions. New program emphases like radio and television and the fine arts are increasingly regarded as imperative.

Starting from Sunday School Association beginnings, Maryland, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Illinois, Minnesota, Ohio, and Michigan, in that order, have all passed their 100th *anniversaries*. Buffalo celebrated its local centennial in 1957 by a dinner, attended by 783, honoring its church school teachers. Other cities had already passed their century marks. As the movement matures, golden anniversaries also grow more numerous and more significant.

Sample Happenings Journalistically Noteworthy

While the *International JOURNAL* published many special issues during this decade,²³ it also—especially from 1951 to 1956—featured much state and local council news, including personnel changes.²⁴ Attendance at the Directors of Religious Education section of the DCE meetings in 1948 was 165; in 1953 it had climbed to 451.²⁵ At the 1953 DCE Fellowship Dinner “Mr. Ketcham traced upon a large map the journeys back and forth across the nation of several of the persons present, showing how intertwined are the lives of people from many different denominations.”²⁶ In 1954 “A rough guess would suggest that somewhere between five and eight million hours per week are given by the 2,699,327 teachers and officers in Protestant church schools.”²⁷ In 1956 attention was called to the First Ecumenical Institute in the southern region, held in North Carolina.²⁸

Four out of five of the 60 issues of the National Council *Outlook* issued during the six-year period 1952-7 contained items of “Church Council News,” rarely less than two columns, a full page more often than not, and often two full pages. Here were chronicled smaller items of spot news, and personnel changes were frequently noted. In addition there were numerous feature articles on particular cities or states.

Approaching meetings of the ACS were repeatedly noted, and in the early fall generously reported. E.g., in September, 1952 the Van Dusen lectures rated the headline: “Wanted: First-rate Christian Leaders”; and in September 1954 appeared a picture of the newly elected ACS Executive Committee.

Of special importance—because of his position as the new chairman of the Central Department of Field Administration—was a February 1953 full-page article by Glenn W. Moore on “Achieving Spiritual Unity in Your Community.” At Denver he had said to the NCC biennial, “Speaking from the standpoint of a denominational officer, . . . I do not believe a program of a council of churches should be overlapping, competitive, or unrelated to the program of the denominations. I believe that enthusiasts for councils of churches who support overlapping programs do a disservice to the cause of Christian unity. And I also believe a similar disservice results when denominational leadership fails to see that both our denominational programs and the programs of councils of churches are essential to the greater cause which each endeavors to serve.” Likewise, in October 1953 Virgil E. Lowder of Houston had a two-page article on the council

movement in the U.S. under the title, "The Job the Churches Can Do Only Together."²⁹

THE ACS GROWS

In Attendance

There is increasing co-operation of councils of churches, local, state, and national, and of their employed personnel, through the ACS. Though in 1951 total ACS attendance was 364, including 113 visitors (guests, husbands, wives, children), the sharp increase that year was not maintained; in fact, later attendance has not quite equalled the 1951 total. Of 363 present in 1959, council executives numbered 238, as compared with 251 in 1951.

A careful three-year breakdown (1953-5) showed that of those in attendance nearly three persons in four were professionals. The number of city executives present was twice that of national staff, which in turn was twice that of state personnel. That is, of every seven votes four were local, two were national, and only one was state.

In Membership

The following tabulation is instructive:³⁰

<i>Year Ending</i>	<i>Number Paying Dues or Making Contributions to the ACS Treasury</i>	
	<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Organizations</i>
1951	253	109
1952	284	105
1953	293	105
1954	286	102
1955	270	94
1956	338	110
1957	309	114
1958	328	118
1959	354	115

The reasons for the fluctuation in organizational interest and support, whether administrative, economic, varying attractiveness of annual meeting programs, or other, have received attention from the officers of the ACS, and deserve continuing study in the light of the number of persons and organizations eligible for membership.

In Income

The total annual financial transactions of the ACS, omitting certain in-and-out items like publication funds, as compared with budgets authorized, are likewise worthy of comparison.

<i>ACS</i>				
<i>Year</i>		<i>Net</i>	<i>Net</i>	
<i>Ending</i>	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Expended</i>	<i>Balance</i>
1951	\$2,200.00	\$2,460.88	\$2,582.13	\$1,341.40
1952	2,800.00	2,837.98	2,501.10	1,681.28
1953	3,700.00	3,614.57	2,898.60	2,399.25
1954	4,200.00	3,656.02	2,761.26	3,294.01
1955	4,525.00	3,831.79	3,361.69	3,764.11
1956	4,925.00	4,378.96	4,768.69	3,374.38
1957	6,685.00	4,631.55	6,163.69	1,842.24
1958	6,185.00	6,402.93	6,159.04	2,086.13
1959	6,495.00	7,286.82	4,981.04	4,511.51
1960	6,660.00			

Thus the volume of dollar business nearly tripled in less than a decade; and the balance in hand ebbed and flowed according to the financial controls exercised from year to year.

In Representativeness

The proportion of organizational contributions and of personal dues in the receipts of the ACS reflects both increases in the amounts requested, and an increasing emphasis on organizational representativeness.

Dollars Paid into ACS Treasury by

	<i>Organizations</i>	<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Net Totals</i>	<i>Percent Organizational</i>
1951	\$1,828	\$ 633	\$2,461	74.3
1952	2,102	736	2,838	74.1
1953	2,730	885	3,615	75.5
1954	2,799	858	3,657	76.5
1955	2,796	810	3,606	77.5
1956	3,186	1,014	4,200	75.9
1957	3,407	927	4,334	72.9
1958	4,343	1,615	5,958	78.4
1959	5,331	1,790	7,121	74.9
9 yr. totals	\$28,522	\$9,268	\$37,790	75.5

In 1958 it was agreed that . . . "membership in ACS as a professional organization is essential whether or not a member attends the conference that particular year." Closely related to the number of individuals paying dues is the question of the function of the ACS. It is—as it has sometimes tended to be—in line with some tendencies in the organizations that preceded it, a conclave of senior executives only, or does it provide a helpful meeting place for program specialists, and junior personnel, as others have steadily maintained? The answer to this question involves many matters of schedule, structure, finance, and specialized professional groupings of others than council personnel. The 1959 program was designed not for general executives only but for all staff personnel.

In Breadth of Program and Organizational Procedures

The records of the ACS begin to acquire a significant place in the history of church co-operation in America. Here, better than anywhere else, one catches the true flavor of grass-roots ecumenicity.

A list of the ACS presidents and program chairmen for the decade will serve to indicate something of the range of its official leadership. Scores of additional persons have been officers, and members of the executive, standing, and special committees, to which with increasing care many matters have been delegated, as the organization has expanded in size and range of interest.

Elected for the Year

<i>Ending</i>	<i>President</i>	<i>Program Chairman</i>
1951	Hugh C. Burr	Forrest C. Weir
1952	Harold C. Kilpatrick	Jennie M. Doidge
1953	Hayden L. Stright	O. Walter Wagner
1954	William D. Powell	Ira C. Sassaman
1955	O. Walter Wagner	Dan M. Potter
1956	Forrest C. Weir	Virgil E. Lowder
1957	Harlan M. Frost	Grover L. Hartman
1958	Virgil E. Lowder	Frederick E. Reissig
1959	Forrest L. Knapp	B. Bruce Whittemore
1960	Harvey W. Hollis	Harold B. Keir
1961		Robert L. Kincheloe

ACS minutes have been prepared with an enlarging sense of their importance, though with varying attention to statistical details of enduring historical value as evidence of trends. The work both of the

secretary and of the treasurer has loomed larger and larger, with the growth of ACS membership and its increased volume of business.

A program feature of central importance at ACS meetings during the decade has been the general seminar. Here an outstanding leader has lectured formally in a series of presentations on some serious and pertinent theme, and opportunity has been provided for the entire Association to join in a discussion period. The mere catalog of these seminar topics and their leaders shows how seriously the ACS has considered its task.

ACS General Seminars

<i>Year</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Lecturer</i>
1951 June 18-23	"This Nation Under God"	Dean Liston Pope, Yale Divinity School
1952 June 16-21	"The Theological Roots of Ecumenicity in American Protestantism"	Pres. Henry Pitney Van Dusen, Union Theological Seminary
1953 June 21-27	"Social and Cultural Factors Affecting Ecumenicity"	Dean Walter G. Muelder, Boston University School of Theology
1954 June 20-26	"Looking Toward Evanston"	Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, of the NCC
1955 June 19-25	"Christian Unity—Its Relevance to the Community"	Dr. J. Quinter Miller, of the NCC
1956 June 17-23	"Christian Faith and the Cultural Situation"	Dr. George D. Kelsey, Drew Theological Seminary, formerly of the NCC
1957 June 16-22	"The Church and the American World"	Prof. H. Reinhold Niebuhr, Yale Divinity School
1958 June 15-21	"Seeking the Ecumenical Church"	Dr. Nils Ehrenstrom, Boston University School of Theology, formerly of the WCC
1959 June 21-27	"Our Witnessing Task"	Dr. Norman Goodall, London Office, IMC and WCC

Among these nine lecturers have been representatives of the faculties of four seminaries, two each from two of them; two representatives

of the World Council, and three of the National Council. Local and state council leaders have diligently sought not to be provincial.

In 1951 Dean Pope confronted the American secretariat with "Our International Responsibility"; in 1952 Dr. Van Dusen stressed the role of theology in ecumenicity; in 1933 Dean Muelder faced "The Problem of (so-called) Nontheological Factors" and "Institutional Resistance to Council Policy." Dr. Miller's 1955 lectures have become a part of the literature of the movement, in the volume *Christian Unity, Its Relevance to the Community*.³¹

The 1951 Tenth Anniversary Session of the ACS began the custom of special sessions for the orientation of newer secretaries, with brief but carefully prepared memoranda on "The Field of Interchurch Cooperation," "The Work of the Executive Secretary," "Departmental Program Administration," "The Secretary's Relationships," and "Resources for Continuous Growth as a Council Leader." Thus newly elected state and local workers were introduced to the thinking of five ACS leaders, as a basis for discussion and conference. Some such introduction to the profession has now become standard procedure at ACS meetings, and the syllabi used are an important part of the documenting of the growth of the council movement.

In 1951 Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill, president of the NCC, spoke on "Foundation Principles for the Council Movement." In a different field a special finance seminar (three sessions) was addressed by George E. Lundy, of Marts and Lundy. "The Philosophy of Interchurch Cooperation" came up for renewed discussion, with specific reference to undergirding the constitutional provision for relationships between the NCC and state and local councils. Difficulties experienced by state and local councils were aired in a panel discussion.

At this meeting Dr. Franklin Clark Fry also ably voiced certain denominational concerns. His president's report to the 1950 Convention of the United Lutheran Church in America on "Relationships with Other Evangelical Christians," including an emphasis on the "evangelical" and "representative" principles, was distributed. On the other hand, the executive of one of the strongest metropolitan councils of churches presented a five-page memo on "Relationships of City and State Councils and Federations to the NCC." Another panel considered "Lay Men and Lay Women in the Cooperative Movement." Threefold attention was given to "The Making of the Executive Secretary," through his habits of study, personal devotion, and relaxation.

Dr. Van Dusen's 1952 lectures contained several statements worth quoting verbatim, because they may well be regarded as deliber-

ately controversial. In speaking of the relation of local and state councils to the NCC, he said: "The NCC at present provides no logical or adequate relationship with the bodies to which it is, in fact, more intimately related than any others. The solution of some of the other important problems is to a large extent dependent on the right solution of this problem." "What is demanded is nothing less than an absolutely fundamental re-examination of the role of the church council within its community and among its churches, i.e., within the organization of society and within the Body of Christ."

And in his review of the changes in the American scene, he declared: "The cultural and sociological factors responsible for the origin of denominations have largely become obsolete." Persons like those who attend the ACS are not likely to forget such recorded statements on the part of an eminent and responsible theologian, in good standing in his own communion, but less involved than some in denominational mechanisms.

In 1953 four significant workshops sought to analyze the council task. One on "Metropolitan Areas" considered finance, radio and TV, public relations, and strategy. Dr. Kenneth G. Neigh, then Presbyterian synodical executive in Michigan, presented an important 5-page paper on "Protestant Strategy in Metropolitan Centers." The workshop on larger cities considered a vital program of religious education, keeping the churches in the black, being realistic about the Council's social-action program, and spiritual ministries to people on the fringe. One on smaller cities asked: "What are good public relations and finance? Do we have a mission? How to fill the gaps in Christian education?" It also discussed the community conscience at work. State council leaders talked about building the state council program on the program of the denominations; planning, promoting, and financing the state pastors' conference; teamwork between state councils and the NCC; and public relations, publicity, and finances. As might well be expected, the parallelism among these groups showed common interest in education, in denominational cooperation, in community action, public relations, and finance. G. Merrill Lenox of Detroit gave a well-documented three-page answer to the question, "Is the Validity of the Conciliar Movement on State and Local Levels Challenged by Present Trends?"

The ecumenical atmosphere in America in 1954 was of course tremendously vitalized by the Evanston sessions of the WCC. "Designs and Freedom in the Ecumenical Movement" and "Christ the Hope of

the World" were very much in American thinking. Hence the special significance of Dr. Johnson's lectures.

On June 21, 1954, the executive committee of the ACS agreed in principle that the nominating group for representation in the various units of the NCC by state, city, and other local levels should be the Executive Committee of the National Council's Central Department of Field Administration or its successor, rather than the ACS, since it was felt that the ACS as a professional fellowship should have no organic connection with any council. Final action was deferred however, pending changes then in process in the NCC.

In 1955 the ACS shifted its attention from world unity to "Grass-Roots Ecumenicity." Under the leadership of Dr. J. Quinter Miller, the relevance of Christian unity to the community, for program, structure, staff, finance, and relationships, was carefully considered. His lectures on this theme, published in 1957, embody principles and procedures that have widely influenced all state and local councils of churches, and have helped denominational leaders without practical experience at the state and local levels better to understand the opportunities of all our communions in connection with community relationships.

By putting an item of \$500 in its budget for the use of certain special committees, the ACS now began statesmanlike long-range, year-round consideration of several difficult problems. Three executives were asked to prepare a strong case for the adoption of an amendment to the Constitution of the NCC at its 1957 Assembly dealing with the representation of the cooperative work of the churches in states and cities, to be used as the basis of discussion in a 1956 ACS session. A committee on the "Present and Future Role and Function of the ACS" was authorized, as was also 1956 consideration of the "Place and Function of State and Local Councils of Churches in the Total Life of the Church." "Criteria for Self-Evaluation and Measurement by Councils of Churches" now came up for careful consideration. The establishment of the Office for Councils of Churches in 1955 was of course of major importance to the ACS, which has been greatly indebted to it for all sorts of services rendered.

The year 1955 was also noteworthy for the publication of the long-awaited *Growing Together*, a manual or operating handbook for councils of churches,³² which began to meet a very great need for a solid volume on council work, after an interval of many years during which only pamphlet material had been available. The peril was that

the rapidly expanding movement would outgrow its inadequate guidance material.

In 1956 the ACS was greeted with 26 mimeographed pages of "Most Significant Developments in State and Local Councils of Churches," one of a long series of important historic memoranda. The special study committees and the Executive Committee had taken their work seriously. Reports were again made on "Representation in the NCC," "The Role and Function of the ACS," and "The Role of Local and State Councils in the Ecumenical Movement." The three special committees were continued, with the understanding that later more time would be allowed for discussion of their further findings. ACS questionnaires indicated:

- (1) Growing satisfaction of seeing our work as councils in an ecumenical context;
- (2) a uniform expression of favor for democratic participation;
- (3) a realization of an increasing spiritual depth in our program.

A statement made at ACS sixteen years earlier, in 1940, concerning ACS work for 1941 and later, now seemed again valuable; and a summary of "Historic Episodes" by John B. Ketcham³³ whetted the appetite for additional historic documentation of the ecumenical movement in its more local aspects.

The year 1957 was significant by reason of the Oberlin Conference on "The Nature of the Unity We Seek," to which the ACS was invited to nominate ten persons as consultants. The ACS noted with satisfaction that the Oberlin section on "Cooperation in State and Local Councils recommended 'an ongoing study of the ecclesiological significance of local, state, and national councils of churches.'" At the June meeting of the ACS, the report of its committee on "The Role of State and Local Councils of Churches in the Ecumenical Movement" was adopted and ordered printed as a document of enduring value. The question of state and local representation on the NCC proved to be a complicated one. In October 1956 the Executive Committee of ACS had acknowledged, "We are not all agreed on what we want." Hence the importance of the reactions to the pertinent Committee report, which was approved at the 1957 meeting of ACS. The report on "The Role and Function of the ACS" was given careful consideration, and the Committee continued.

The exceptionally valuable mimeographed minutes of the 1957 ACS by Daniel R. Ehalt (Oak Park council executive), secretary, including committee reports and revised by-laws, were again supplemented

by "Outstanding Developments in Councils of Churches During the Year 1956-7." Special attention had been given to strengthening membership in the ACS, and vice president Ellis H. Dana of Wisconsin had devised and circulated a folder, "Why You Should Belong to ACS."

The year 1958 marked the tenth anniversary of the World Council and the golden anniversary of the Federal Council. On receipt of its report, the committee on "Role and Function of the ACS" was discharged. Progress reports on professional standards, personnel practices, and representation in the NCC resulted in the continuance of these committees. (There appeared to be an honest difference of opinion as to whether a council secretary needs to be an ordained minister.) The general theme, "The New Dimension in Our Council Movement—Our Involvement with Faith and Order," harked back to the Oberlin Conference.

By 1959 the various ACS study committees had become so important an aspect of the organization's program that a Committee on Studies (Virgil E. Lowder, Grover L. Hartman, and Harold Kilpatrick) had been named, to consider the whole study task. On receiving this committee's thoroughgoing report, the ACS named a new committee of seven members, with Dr. Forrest L. Knapp as chairman, continuing the three men who had served in 1958-9, and adding Dr. William B. Cate, Dr. J. Quinter Miller, Dr. Stanley Stuber, and (as consultant) Rev. William A. Norgren of the NCC staff, Faith and Order Department. This committee is currently budgeted for \$300.00, and ACS study committees have spent an average of more than that during four previous fiscal years.

In Influence

Some unavoidable repetition in reporting National Council aspects of the "Field" situation will underscore the increasing influence of the ACS. The necessity and desirability for all national interdenominational agencies and programs to keep in close touch with the ACS grows clearer to all concerned. This contact is made the more sure because so many of the National Council staff are themselves ACS members.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL AND "THE FIELD"

The extent of the present representation of state and local councils in the various units of the National Council is impressive.³⁴ It is an open secret, however, that even the Division of Christian Education finds it not easy to maintain the intended balance of representation between councils of churches and denominations. Other units, where the habit of territorial representation has been less well established, may

have even greater difficulty. Though the opportunity for participation by state and local council representatives has been widely accepted, the accompanying responsibility for sharing in policy-making has not been everywhere accepted. The degree to which elected state and local personnel have actually participated in National Council meetings, and by correspondence, is not clear; nor are the channels by which they can communicate to and from the state and local bodies.

The problem here is more than administrative, though limitations of state and local staff time and travel funds, and similar practical considerations, are an important factor; and so is the inadequacy of intercouncil machinery. In practice, do not denominational representatives in the National Council possess superior status? Has the National Council ever regarded state and city councils as loci of basic structure, comparable to the denominations? Should it? This is an ecclesiological problem, a matter of church politics in the high sense (the science of the possible); it is even a theological problem, quite as much as an organizational and institutional matter.

The General Assembly

From the outset, the NCC has been sure that its "membership" should be limited to delegates chosen by its member communions. But it has always been equally clear that it would be advantageous to all concerned if state and local councils could also name additional "representatives," to be individually authenticated as members of the particular cooperating communion to which each belongs. In this way the voice of community experience is added to the testimony of the denominations, which are the prime units of the corporation.

By 1954 the National Council Assembly, meeting in Boston November 28 to December 3, was seating one representative from each state council and a panel of ten representing the city councils, but the 1954 *Work Book*, in reporting field developments, found "a consistent and sound pattern of relationships between the NCC and state and local councils of churches . . . a complex problem." "Thus far we cannot report much progress in solving organizational patterns for comprehensive councils of churches for recommendation to local constituencies. Such patterns are needed in order to expedite effective functional relations among national, state, and local agencies. State and local constituencies want guidance on the basis of policies and plans that are acceptable to all units of the Council; they do not want patterns dictated by national staff people. But suggestions must take into account the types of structure that have been already adopted by

the denominations for the NCC. It is our conviction that substantial progress has been made."

At the General Assembly in St. Louis in December 1957 a proposal to amend the Constitution of the National Council printed in the *Work Book* as recommended by the General Board (after a disappointingly close vote, at the close of a discussion that seems to have strayed from the main issue under consideration) was withdrawn. Instead, a "thorough study by a special committee" of the General Board was authorized, and the General Board was "instructed to bring the 1960 triennial meeting of the General Assembly . . . such amendment or amendments to the Constitution as it may deem necessary to insure adequate representation of the co-operative work of the churches in the various states, cities, and counties, while preserving the nature of the National Council . . . as a council of *churches*." So the matter stands as this history goes to press.

The Division of Christian Education (DCE)

Nowhere had the relation between national, state, and local co-operation been more real than in the field of religious education. Nowhere was the National Council under greater obligation to consult the thinking of the state councils. This it has faithfully done.

In the 1954 *DCE Year Book* "the growing trend toward fuller denominational participation in city, state, and national councils" was noted with satisfaction. There was increasing consultation with city and state councils, utilization of ongoing council programs, city and state sponsorship of nationally devised programs, and active participation in them. The February sectional meetings have provided a natural opportunity for learning field reactions, during advisory stages of new programs, and for sharing reports of cooperative activities. Field strategy was worked out in consultation with the ACS, and reactions and evaluations were cordially invited.

While the ACS has been the professional fellowship of staff personnel, local, state, and national, the National Council has continued to have administrative and counselling units devoted to field program and administration. One of these, appropriately, has been the Division of Christian Education's *Educational Field Services Committee*. This committee has cleared field concerns and projects and has calendarized events in the interest of effective utilization of personnel and enlistment of field response. By steady referral of all field proposals both to the denominations and to the state and local councils involved, the way has been prepared for increasing mutuality and participation.

As listed in 1955, this committee contained eight national denominational field staff persons, six denominational voluntary field staff persons, six state council executives, and six city council executives, out of a total of 53 members, including ten staff members *ex officio*, without vote.

State and Local Representation in DCE

The first available listing of representatives of state councils in DCE as a whole appears in the 1952 divisional *Year Book*. Of the 33 state councils (including the District of Columbia and fractions of three additional states, with two councils in California) entitled to divisional representation, 26 (or fewer than the member associations in the International Sunday School Association thirty years earlier) had named a total of 167 representatives. In the 1958 *Year Book* representatives from 31 of 37 member councils numbered 209. State delegations have ranged from one person, usually the state council executive, to as high as twenty-two in the Pennsylvania Council of Christian Education. One suspects that there has been a certain loss in lay representation, and a number of the states have been tardy in their appointments. Certainly, however, DCE has given ample recognition, both in principle and in fact, to the rights of state councils of religious education agreed upon at the time of the Kansas City merger and the organization of the International Council.

Divisional year books have regularly provided a generous column for an ACS report. In 1956 Forrest C. Weir reported on the ACS attitude toward the approaching Oberlin Conference on "The Nature of the Unity We Seek," "Over and over we heard the conviction expressed: 'The time has arrived when ecumenical program at the community level must include participation in faith and order studies, though it cannot neglect its service activities developed over the years.' " Likewise in 1957 Harlan M. Frost reported, "The memorial service each year at ACS reminds one of how far it has come as the names of the stalwarts of yesteryear are read. But each summer the incoming group of new secretaries, educated and prepared as the earlier generation could not be, and full of purpose and dedication, give one the sense that this council movement is vigorous and still 'on the make.' " And all the 1958 report on the ACS noted that "the ACS yearly conference in personal enrichment, in professional growth, in helpful exchange of ideas, in evaluation of our own techniques, in finding solutions to crucial problems, in Christian fellowship, is often the most rewarding week of the year to a busy council executive."

Central Department of Field Administration (CDFA)

The National Council as a whole has given attention to state and local council relationships successively in two different ways, CDFA and GCPFO (General Committee on Program and Field Administration), to use the jargon or gobbledygook of American ecumaniacs. Until 1954 there was a Central Department of Field Administration. As finally constituted, this Department involved 112 persons, from 13 groups, in addition to the national field staff of seven. Attendance at seven sessions during four years averaged 43 members, in addition to staff and guests. With regrets recorded from a dozen to sixteen persons, a considerable degree of interest appears to have been maintained. Organized with Hugh Chamberlin Burr of Rochester as chairman, this Department took over the work of the former ICFD, adopted its own by-laws, and operated under an initial budget in excess of \$60,000. It, rather than the ACS, now became the normal channel for the nomination of representatives of the cooperative work of the churches in cities to the National Council. Various subcommittees, including one on field organization, went to work.

Along with the representative principle, the evangelical principle and the principle of autonomy were both approved as basic. W. P. Buckwalter, Jr., was added to the staff, as Director of Financial Counseling, to work with city, county, and state councils of churches, effective April 1, 1952. Planning and adjustment were shifted to the Division of Home Missions. Dr. Glenn W. Moore, made chairman of the Department at the end of 1952, had presented a significant paper on "Criteria for Self-Evaluation and Measurement by a State and City Council of Churches." In 1953 important recommendations were made to the General Board by the Committee of the NCC on Policy and Strategy, looking toward strengthening cooperation in state and local councils of churches. Only after long discussion were basic structural changes in the national setup approved.

In November 1953 Willis R. Ford, then of Maryland-Delaware, reported progress on the long-awaited *Field Guidance Manual*. Mr. Buckwalter was then able to report that state and local council income exceeded six million dollars. The Department membership repeatedly broke up into eight or nine parallel seminars for the discussion of various aspects of the field task. In March 1954, in a discussion of field structure and relationships, it was voted that in the appointment of the proposed NCC Committee on Program and Field Operations due recognition should be given to having an adequate proportion of

the members represent state and local councils of churches, and that representation, lay as well as professional, should be available for consideration of program as well as administration. It was emphasized that stress should be put on "interrelationships" rather than on lines of "demarcation" between national interests on the one hand, and state and local on the other. A tentative statement on field outreach policy was referred to the new Committee on Program and Field Operations for further study.

General Committee on Program and Field Operations (GCPFO)

Authorized by the General Board March 17, 1954, after sixteen months of study by the Committee on Study and Adjustment, the General Program and Field Operations Committee met for the first time on November 27, 1954, with Dr. Glenn W. Moore as chairman. Its genesis was outlined. Functions were assigned, and in March 1955 sub-committees established. The committee membership was to "include general denominational leaders, general program executives of denominations, state and local council leaders, and representatives of the major program units of the Council, with the executives of major program units of the Council as consultants without votes." Temporary subcommittees were free to include additional personnel. The General Committee was "not operational." A temporary committee took over the issuing of the *Field Guidance Manual*, and was dismissed a year later, with the publication of *Growing Together* in 1955.

In March 1955 a permanent Advisory Committee of 21 for the Office for Councils of Churches was authorized, of whom at least seven were to be from the General Committee, as well as state and local officers and executives, pastors, and lay men and women experienced in the cooperative work of the churches in state and local communities.

As at present constituted, the GCPFO consists of 54 members, in addition to sixteen staff persons of several sorts. The membership includes six city and three state executives. Attendance at nine regular meetings held over a four-year period in six different places (repeatedly in connection with other NCC meetings, five of the nine in New York or Chicago) averaged 45 persons, including staff; and ranged from 37 to 52. Meetings varied from a single session to parts of three days. Early in 1959 attention was given to the importance of adequate information and clearance in any long-range planning for field operations.

The task of GCPFO includes the study of methods of work, procedures for interunit clearance, coordination of policy in program

areas, and an advisory relationship to the Bureau of Research and Survey, the Office for Councils of Churches, and the Southern Office. Staff responsibility rests with two assistant general secretaries, one for program and one for field operations, who report to the associate general secretary.

Office for Councils of Churches (OCC)

For the purpose of this history the Office for Councils of Churches is perhaps the most significant phase of this new national field structure. Organized with fifteen members, its Advisory Committee has increased to 21 members from 9 denominations; these are supplemented by 10 consultants and three staff persons. Of the 21 members, nine are denominational persons not employed as council staff, while a dozen are state and local council persons authenticated by their respective denominations. Recorded total attendance has ranged from nine to sixteen. Annual sessions have been the rule. Each has been held in a different city, chiefly in the midwest.

Raymond R. Peters, recently executive at Dayton, Ohio, was the first chairman. At the first session of the Advisory Committee, held in July 1955, it was explained that the NCC was seeking to bring field administration into the central concern of the General Board. As part of the new structure, the functions of the Office for Councils of Churches were outlined, a baker's dozen of them. The OCC staff at the outset included one part-time person for Chicago relationships, and arrangement that was discontinued when DCE moved to New York in 1956. Specific staff responsibility rested with John B. Ketcham and W. P. Buckwalter, Jr.; but Dr. J. Quinter Miller remained responsible for the general supervision of this office and the southern office, and for assistance in field interpretation, evaluation of programs, and personnel counselling. It was agreed that reports of the Advisory Committee for the Office for Councils of Churches to GCPFO should be made by the OCC chairman.

At the outset Mr. Ketcham gave approximately a third of his time to the New York office, a third to the Chicago office, and a third to work in the field. The consolidation of the office in New York early in 1956 was of great help in unifying his task. Dr. Miller also continued to serve on the DCE Committee on Field Services, and on the Staff Field Operations Committee, which was retained. Gratitude has been expressed that the various units of the NCC are increasingly consulting the staff of the OCC as they develop policies and programs of concern to councils of churches.

As compared with an actual expenditure of \$44,163.87, the OCC budgets for 1955 and 1956 were \$53,710 and \$56,483 respectively. There was anticipated income of \$13,160 toward the latter figure, thus reducing the net amount needed to \$43,323. Beginning in 1955, all undesignated income from councils of churches has gone to support field operations, including both the OCC and the Southern Office. How to increase this income has been a problem.

There was a feeling that, especially as regards councils with volunteer personnel, the movement had reached a plateau. Service rendered to these councils from state and national bodies was deemed inadequate. Decrease in numbers of volunteer councils was held to be due in part to sociological factors (e.g., the declining political significance of many counties), and the disappearance in some states of county councils as units of cooperation. On the other hand, 28 councils had moved from volunteer to paid status. The Advisory Committee felt it necessary to consider the advisability of adding another staff member by 1960 to work with state council executives in developing greater help for volunteer councils. The OCC was now issuing a *News Letter*. It employed two office secretaries to serve its two executives; a third typist position was projected, and later established. It was reported in 1956 that when city councils reach a \$70,000 budget, or state councils \$80,000, they need at least a part-time staff member to handle income, or the executive secretary will have little time to spend on program activities. Job analysis for staff members has also come up for increased attention.

In 1953 DCE received from 29 state councils a total of \$4,614.05, in sums ranging from \$25 (N.C.) to \$505.05 (N.J.). OCC income from two sources for its first five years of operation was reported as follows:

	<i>From Councils</i>	<i>From Local Churches and Individuals</i>
1954	\$12,547	\$1,661
1955	14,592	2,046
1956	16,002	2,457
1957	16,593	?
1958	16,820	2,979
1959	16,329	2,475

OCC expenditures for 1958 amounted to \$52,362. Obviously, "the field," while increasing its support, is paying only a fraction of the cost of serving it. The implications deserve more consideration than many have given them.

In March 1957 John B. Ketcham presented a November 1956 paper on "Cooperative Protestantism—A Strategy for Serving Metropolitan Areas." He took up developing patterns, relationship of larger city councils to growing metropolitan areas, geographical problems, differing philosophies and problems involved in these philosophies, and relationship to state councils of churches. The reaction of an inadequately attended, too brief session was voiced by one member of the group: "We are impressed with the fact that this is on the agenda, but depressed by the fact that there is not time to discuss fully its implications." One regrets to say that this seems too typical of the work of the Advisory Committee so far—too few present, and not enough time.

In 1958 G. Merrill Lenox of Detroit and Michigan became chairman. There was a careful check-up on how well and to what extent assigned functions had been performed. There was extended discussion of a breakfast talk by Dr. Truman B. Douglass at St. Louis in December, 1957, on "Relations of Denominations to Councils."³⁵ Its widespread consideration was favored.

One cannot avoid the feeling that "not operational" applies to the GCPFO, the Advisory Committee for the OCC, and to the ACS—all three. This seems to mean that field work becomes operational only at the staff level. If this be true, the further question arises, Is the present national provision for facing up to state and local problems and increasing opportunities adequate? Is the available staff sufficient in number, in variety of skills, and in budgetary resources? To state it more positively, large matters are afoot; and the machinery for patient, long-range planning is available, but under-staffed and under-financed.

How Interpret What Has Happened

So much for the facts up to now, in swift summary, and in comparison with the tremendous volume of documentation in relatively brief detail. But such a mass of events needs interpretation. How shall one appraise the tendencies at work over so many decades? A concluding chapter endeavors as concisely as possible first to discover some of the possible meanings of all that has been so far recorded, and then to offer a few hints for possible future action.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter IX

- ¹ Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
- ² See *Staff Titles in Local Councils*, App. V., pp. 114, 115, and in *State Councils*, App. VI, pp. 116, 117, in Miller, *Christian Unity—Its Relevance to the Community*.
- ³ *The Church Woman*, December, 1952.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, June-July 1959.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, January 1957.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, January 1958 and 1959.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, February 1956.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, March 1953.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, June-July 1957.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, December 1959, Ruth Moguey Worrell, pp. 13-15.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, March 1955.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, November 1954.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, May 1952, Edith L. Groner.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, as reported in the March number of each succeeding year, state and local contributions to DUCW amounted to

1953	\$42,870
1954	45,062
1955	45,685
1956	47,000
1957	49,694
1958	50,346
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, August-September 1952 ff.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, February 1953.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, August-September 1954, p. 39 (also mimeographed 8/2/54.)
- ¹⁹ As distinguished from the number of persons noted earlier.
- ²⁰ Cf. *International Journal*, December, 1953, Elizabeth Longwell: "The Virginia State Council Services Local Communities." (More than 52,000 pupils are enrolled, 96% of the pupils in the grades where the program is offered. Nearly a third of these pupils have little or no connection with the church. Nearly 400 communities are served.)
- ²¹ Tabulation of the geographical distribution of subscribers to *The Church Woman* as of March 10, 1953 (back cover of April, 1953 issue), and December 1, 1958 (map, pp. 20, 21, August-September, 1959), visualizes the widespread and increasing interest in co-operative women's work throughout the nation. Excluding 246 foreign subscriptions, there were 19,932 subscribers to this journal in 1953, ranging from 36 in Nevada and in Utah to 1,369 in New York State; in 1958 the domestic total had increased to 27,655, ranging from 8 in Alaska to 1,903 in Ohio. Started as a quarterly bulletin of the NCFW in 1935, and in 1938 becoming the joint publication of the three groups merged in the 1941 UCCW, *The Church Woman* celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1959.
- ²² The figures used are compiled from Numbers 1 to 10 of the invaluable *Financial Counseling*, issued by the Office for Councils of Churches, and prepared by W. P. Buckwalter, Jr.
- ²³ E.g., on age groups, alcohol, camping, drama, missions, peace, race relations, worship, etc.

- 24 Each personnel change was likely to be part of a chain of three or more moves. E.g., when Harold C. Kilpatrick became the first executive of the new Texas Council in 1953, J. T. Morrow moved from St. Paul to San Antonio, to fill that vacancy, and W. Bruce Hadley from Omaha to St. Paul, and Walter E. Daniels from the Cleveland staff to Omaha. What happens in pastoral appointments or calls to local churches is paralleled in council staff changes.
- 25 *International Journal*, January 1953.
- 26 *Ibid.*, April 1953.
- 27 *Ibid.*, November 1954, editorial.
- 28 *Ibid.*, June 1956.
- 29 The tendency in *The Outlook* over these recent years seems to have been toward longer feature stories. The February 1957 issue devoted 4 pages to state and local council work, and others only slightly less. Typical of this decade was the growth of the Council of Churches of Buffalo and Erie County, N.Y., under the fifteen-year leadership of Rev. Harlan M. Frost, recently retired.
- 30 These and other later similar data appearing in this chapter are compiled from the records of the ACS as provided in the mimeographed annual minutes.
- 31 Shenandoah Publishing House, 1957.
- 32 NCC, 1955.
- 33 ACS 1956 Minutes, pp. 59-64.
- 34 For an excellent factual statement, cf. the unpublished discussion paper presented by R. H. Edwin Espy at the NCC Consultation on Long-Range Planning, in November 1959; also Mr. Ketcham's careful 8-page mimeographed analysis of state and local NCC representation, February 1959.
- 35 Published in *The Christian Century*, January 8, 1958.

Meanings and Expectations

Accelerated Expectations

The pre-ecumenical era ended very recently. In the 1930's workers at the state and local level, however expectant, were often thwarted by a feeling of frustration, because of the complexity of the cooperative enterprise, its many national agencies, and the seemingly elephantine ponderosity of its movements. This confusion has slowly given way to orderliness, though complexity remains, by the very nature of the multiplicity of church interests in relation to such a complicated culture.

Forty years ago some of us had the joy of pioneering in local councils that were "inclusive"; nearly thirty years ago Connecticut effected a merger at the state level. Then followed, in quick succession, national staff and Inter-Council field cooperation. Finally, state and local executives, many of whom had clamored for larger unity "at the top," were themselves willing to pool their strength in the ACS. By 1940, in the midst of a changing world climate, it was only a question of time until the NCC would be a reality.

If Norman Cousins is right when he says that man "has to convert historical experience into a design for a sane world,"¹ church cooperation will rejoice in the progress it has made, but will be very sure that it has "not yet attained" much that the future will make necessary, if organized religion is to be a less chaotic aspect of our national life.

How Far Have We Come?

By and large, councils of churches seem to thrive in direct proportion to the density of the population. In 1956 the percentage of places (cities, towns, counties, and states) having councils ranged thus:

<i>Size of Area (Population)</i>	<i>Number of Places</i>	<i>With Councils with Paid Staff</i>		<i>Volunteer</i>	
		<i>No.</i>	<i>% of places</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>% of places</i>
1,000,000 up	51	42	82.4	2	3.9
500,000-999,999	54	27	50.0	3	5.6
250,000-499,999	74	26	35.1	9	12.2
100,000-249,999	218	56	25.7	28	12.8
50,000- 99,999	383	49	12.8	65	17.0
25,000- 49,999	899	37	4.1	134	14.9
10,000- 24,999	1959	32	1.6	206	10.5
5,000- 9,999	1692	7	.4	81	4.8
Under 5,000	16371	18	.1	119	.7
	<hr/> 21701	<hr/> 294		<hr/> 647	

Or, as to organized and unorganized territory, these OCC figures may be summarized:

<i>Population</i>	<i>Total Pd. and Vol. Councils</i>	<i>Percent of Places</i>	<i>Number of Places without Councils²</i>
1,000,000 up	44	86.3	7
500,000-999,999	30	55.6	24
250,000-499,999	35	47.4	39
100,000-249,999	84	38.5	134
50,000- 99,999	114	29.8	269
25,000- 49,999	171	19.0	728
10,000- 24,999	238	12.1	1721
5,000- 9,999	88	5.2	1604
Under 5,000	137	.8	16234
	<hr/> 941		<hr/> 20760

We have come a long way, but in terms of the total potential we seem only to have begun to occupy the land. One conclusion is plain: Churches associated interdenominationally in state and local councils of churches have as clear a right and *as manifest a duty* to express their cooperative attitudes and convictions as they have when associated in their respective denominations.³

God can be in the experience of local churches of various sorts associated together in their communities, quite as much as in the history of their denominational fellowships. The communion of saints is geographical and contemporary, as well as continuous and historical. God

is still acting, His creation is not yet finished, He still reveals His nature and His will. Ecumenical discovery can be most vital when it is local.

WHY HAVE WE TRAVELLED THUS FAR TOGETHER?

Church cooperation in America has had a dual purpose. (1) It has been a means to get many necessary jobs done, of a sort that no individual church could do alone. (2) It has also been an effort to embody a sense of unity dimly felt, in recognition of the fact that the Church, and therefore the churches, as Visser 't Hooft said at Oberlin, are not merely human enterprises, "which (men) have a right to fashion according to their own will and insight."

Social Determinism

Secular pressures have included urbanization, international strife, depression, and other unsettling forces.

One aspect of urbanization has been the increase of Roman Catholic population in city neighborhoods, formerly Protestant, along with Jewish immigration that has bulked large in some cities. A Protestant minority, however diverse within itself, has tended to seek some solidarity. In some metropolitan areas this has been an acute need, and in some whole states it has undoubtedly been a contributory factor in increasing church cooperation.⁴

Emphasis on the need for community solidarity during World Wars I and II had two consequences. (1) Especially during World War I, the easy association of churches with non-ecclesiastical bodies in all sorts of community effort tended to blur the requirements of membership in a strictly *interchurch* organization. Later the slogan "Let the Church Be the Church" made the churches emphasize their own unique role. (2) The 1917 Pittsburgh Congress, described in Chapter V, proved once more that God can make the wrath of men to praise Him, in terms of Christian Cooperation in wartime. That what ought to happen through sweetness and light is sometimes accelerated by military necessity is ground both for gratitude and sadness. In 1945, fifteen years ago, the uneasy ending of six years of terrible strife was an occasion of solemn joy, and of deep heart-searching. Said Bishop Eivind Berggraf, when the World Council forces were able to meet for the first time after the war, in the Cathedral of Geneva, in closing his sermon, "During the war, Christ has said to us: My Christians, you are one."⁵ How now were the workaday churches to make more visible their unity in Christ?

Between the two World Wars other factors were at work. The period made a mood of moral let-down more or less inevitable, with consequences for all cooperative effort. In 1924, when Dr. Guild had been handicapped by so great a deficit, Dr. King's predecessor, Dr. Charles E. Vermilya, had confessed, "The most elusive and uncertain of all forces are those which are classed as 'interdenominational.' Interdenominational ideals and organizations are still to a large extent in the realm of the abstract. They represent aspirations and prophecies that have not taken hold of the loyalties and practices of any large group in religious circles." (It may be more than a coincidence that 1924 was the year George Gershwin wrote *Rhapsody in Blue*.)

A couple of years later the able Rochester secretary, Orlo J. Price, told the Federal Council,⁶ "The reason we are making such slow progress in church cooperation is because denominational officials are not holding up the practice of cooperation as one of the great tests of a successful pastor in the several denominations. When the Methodist district superintendent begins to ask not simply how many new members of Methodist churches the pastor has secured, but also how much he has cooperated in community programs with other pastors, then we shall really get ahead. When the Baptist state superintendent inquires of Baptist pastors not merely how much money they have raised for Baptist projects, but also to what extent they have shared in interdenominational undertakings with other churches in the same town, then the cooperation of which we talk will become a reality. The responsibility cannot be delegated to the FC; if the denominations really meant what they said when they created the FC, it is the solemn duty of all denominational officials themselves to help educate their constituencies in the spirit and practice of cooperation."

Added to the moral confusion of the 1920's came the Depression. On May 15, 1930, the executive of a church council in a great metropolitan industrial center asked, "Is the cooperative movement going anywhere? Have we reached the top?" A couple of years later he knew that we had not yet reached the bottom! But far fewer church enterprises than banks went bankrupt; and the councils—almost all of them—somehow weathered the storm. By January 1936 Dr. Guild was saying, "There is full agreement to the fact that to close the city headquarters for cooperative Christian work would be more foolish than closing the Chamber of Commerce would be for business institutions."

The non-economic factor of the lesser loyalties, which so puzzled Dr. Price, still puzzles local and state council executives a generation later. "Speaking on the occasion of his retirement as executive secretary

of the Rhode Island Council of Churches, Earl H. Tomlin warned that the ecumenical movement has slowed down and a resurgence of denominationalism has appeared where there was once a hope for Christian unity, . . . that 'vested interest' on the part of denominational leaders, a lack of real desire to minimize denominational barriers, and an emphasis on 'brand names' instead of world Christianity are largely responsible for the resurgence of denominationalism."⁷ So Dr. Goodsell writes of "the virus of resurgent denominationalism."⁸

Meanwhile, among the "younger churches," new voices are heard. Says Bola Ige, former secretary of the Nigerian Student Christian Movement, "We (African Christians) cannot afford the luxury of denominationalism, which Americans seem to enjoy."⁹ On the other hand, one of our most thoughtful and well-trained younger executives insists, "At the present moment in history a complete merger of all denominations into one church does not seem a necessity or a probability. What is important is that the church becomes one undivided body in fellowship."¹⁰ If undenominationalism is in danger of being denominationalism *minus*, interdenominationalism faces an increasing opportunity for being denominationalism *plus*. In any case, the question keeps recurring, "Has church cooperation promised more than it has delivered?" What is the nature of the unity we have been seeking?

The Aspirations of Christian Leaders

A century ago last year Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared. In that same year, 1859, other books published included *A Tale of Two Cities* by Dickens, *Essay on Liberty* by John Stuart Mill, *Idylls of the King* by Tennyson, and volumes by Thackeray, Eliot, Ruskin, and other eminent writers.¹¹ The social origins of ecclesiastical species were as yet little realized, but there were stirrings toward a greater unity among the people of the faith.

In 1866 Whittier wrote,
"We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray;
But, dim or clear, we own in thee
The Light, the Truth, the Way."

The 1869 Sunday School Convention went on record:¹² "We rejoice in the spirit of Christian union that has been manifested by this Convention, demonstrating that whatever our denominational differences, we are one in Christ and in Christian work." (Technically, what they were talking about was not "union" but spiritual *unity*.) Similarly in 1873 Dr. Charles Hodge said, "If all churches, whether

local or denominational, believed that they are one body in Christ Jesus, then instead of conflict we should have concord; . . . instead of rivalry and opposition we should have cordial cooperation.”¹³

During the early years of our century Dr. Frank Mason North was moved by the common consideration of “a great central theme—the plea which faith and service make in this day and in this land for a united church, a church one in spirit and adjusted in its several branches for federation in organization and cooperation in action.”¹⁴ A little later¹⁵ Edgar P. Hill affirmed: “Past, we trust, are the days when any branch of the evangelical church would insist that a community is not being evangelized unless *its* agents are doing the work.” (One wishes that his hope had been more fully realized.)

But the new Home Missions Councils, organized in 1908, were “not widely known, largely because they were responsible not to denominations as such but to their mission boards,” and “had relatively low visibility.”¹⁶ Moreover, as Dr. King pointed out,¹⁷ “each member society had (only) one vote” in the HMC, which was “not intended to be a mission agent.” It existed rather for “conference, fellowship, and cooperation”; and not for operational purposes, against which there has been steady denominational resistance until now.

In 1919 the FC general secretary said, “The denominational consciousness in the constituent bodies of the FC was never as strong as at the present moment, and it is rapidly deepening. We thus have these two seemingly contradictory phenomena—intensified denominationalism and increasing unity.”¹⁸ To be sure, Dr. Macfarland also cited a 1920 statement of Dr. Cavert’s: “The Council rests on the principle that the pathway to the larger unity that we seek lies through the field of action”;¹⁹ but, as far as denominational boards were concerned, this action was likely to be simultaneous and cooperative, rather than operationally representative. At every level it was necessary and seemed desirable to keep the emphasis on cooperation, not some other more distant goal.²⁰

Like the Federal Council, the National Council seems by its very existence to strengthen the separateness of its partners; but the chairman’s address before NCC’s DFM, in Pittsburgh December 7-10, 1958, sounded a new note: “Most of our cooperation has not been planned with the whole strategy of the mission of God in mind. . . . We have been reluctant to delegate to the cooperative bodies we have created . . . any creativity that places them in position to challenge the sovereignty of denominational control. . . . We should seek to encourage the DFM to seek a creative relationship with its cooperating boards which

places it in a position of leadership rather than a group that merely executes the responsibilities allocated to it by the boards.”²¹ (How often in the DHM also have staff members been reminded that its function was to foster “co-operation” but not to “operate.”)

The DFM leader continued, “We may be able to contribute more to the advance of the Kingdom of God through the emerging ecumenical movement than we will alone within a strictly denominational structure. . . . The continuing identity of our denomination is not of major importance, . . . the really important thing is whether the Church of Jesus Christ is free to develop along the lines that may not be familiar to us now and yet be within the purpose and intent of God. . . . The ecumenical era . . . is a new kind of thinking in which the non-essential lines of separateness within the field of religion become unimportant. The ecumenical era can become a new thrust in the mission of God.”²²

Word from the Field Increasingly Invited

Says the current folder, “The NCC, What It Is—What It Does,” “About 900 local and state councils of churches, and more than 2,000 ministerial associations, work with the Council at the community level. State and local councils of churches are also represented officially in the Council.”

In Chapter IX the impressive nature of this state and local representation in the NCC was noted, but its extent was only hinted at. Actually there is now such representation in no less than 55 NCC units: the General Assembly, the General Board and nine of its committees, the four Division Assemblies, the Commission on Christian Education and fourteen of its committees, three DCE, seven DCLW, two DFM, and four DHM committees, as well as on DUCM, DUCW, the Department of Evangelism, the National Christian Teaching Mission, the Department of Church World Service, the Broadcasting and Film Commission, the Bureau of Research and Survey and its committee on HM research, and the Washington Office Committee. Mr. Ketcham’s computation shows 517 individual positions where state or local councils of churches have been represented, by a total of 415 different persons, from 43 states and Puerto Rico, and 27 city councils. Both quantitatively and qualitatively this would seem to be significant and generous representation. It provides an index both of NCC hospitality and of state and local interest. If there is a problem here, it lies in part, at least, in the realm of subnational structure and of intercouncil communication, where from the outset state and local councils have been entirely autonomous. If NCC is Barkus, it would seem that “Barkus is

willin’,” far more than some impatient critics have thought. A major question is: “How can state and local councils organize their forces (not merely their professional personnel) and exchange the results of their wide-flung experience? Have they themselves been unwitting victims of a new sort of clericalism?”

More is now required than the testimony of brilliant individuals, however representative. Four hundred fifteen men and women, properly related to their constituents, could be a mighty force; and their combined testimony would undoubtedly be cordially welcomed at the national and world levels. What they need is not so much a vote, but a chance to witness, and to carry back word to the organizations they represent. They would appear to be entirely free to seek the mind of the field and to report to it. But how?

Desires of the Rank and File

A generation ago Dr. H. Paul Douglass found that the great loyalty of federation constituents, both lay and ministerial, was a symbol of unity achieved and in process. Even though “churchmen generally (thought) of federation as a working convenience rather than as an organic expression of the unity of the participating churches,”²³ the movement had already acquired “enormous symbolic meaning.”²⁴

There are no comparable data for recent years, but a new survey would probably confirm the earlier findings. Consider the popular response to Dr. E. Stanley Jones’ presentation of “Federal Union,” however over-simplified that proposal may seem to the experienced ecclesiastical administrator. Consider the widespread interest in the Oberlin Conference, and the growing attention paid by the ACS and local groups, as well as state councils of churches to questions of faith and order. President Eisenhower has whimsically ventured the guess that if government leaders do not get out of their way, some of these days the peoples of the earth, including our own, are likely to wage peace. Perhaps the same might prove true of church leaders and church unity. In spite of all lesser loyalties, do not the great rank and file of lay people feel that the Church is something vaster than their own particular communion, whatever it is, and however dear?

Ecclesiastical Action and Popular Thinking

In 1930 Dr. Douglass was convinced that “The Federation has to worm its way into nooks and crannies not yet pre-empted nor later discovered by the denominations. At no point has it been free to run and be glorified.”²⁵ He felt forced to raise the question as to whether the denominations were afraid of federation as “the symbol of a unity

that in principle they cannot deny."²⁶ He found the "situation . . . safer denominationally speaking, because . . . headed up in a national system strictly subject to denominational action." This, to his mind, meant that "the cooperative movement as a whole (was) definitely fixed in the clamps of current denominationalism." He thought, however, that "the denominations (were) following a probably sound instinct in feeling that if they cooperate a little, Protestant public opinion will be slower in forcing them to a degree of unity for which they are not ready."²⁷ The national system of church cooperation would now seem to be more subject than ever to denominational action. On the other hand, much water has run under the bridge in thirty years, and it is now entirely safe to raise the question, "How permanent are the denominations themselves?"²⁸ On the other hand, have we sharpened the either-or aspect of this problem over-much? Should we have regarded denominationalism as an asset rather than as a difficulty?

As for the foreseeable future, denominations are of course to be taken for granted. Instead of being regarded as opponents of cooperation, it would seem more realistic to consider them as the basis of cooperative effort among Protestant and Orthodox churches. But as long ago as 1931 some of us were sure that "the federation movement favors those forces that make the church a servant of the community, rather than the community the servant of the church; which utilizes educational methods rather than mere propaganda."²⁹ Was this also too sharp an alternative to draw? We were sure, in any case, that the churches should build themselves into the life of the community, rather than build themselves up at the expense of the community.³⁰

In 1931 it seemed necessary to confess, "It is a long row that must be hoed between the present competitive denominationalism and the cooperative Protestantism of tomorrow." Much of that long row has now been hoed—but by no means all of it. Then it seemed that "the church federation movement is an effort by the conciliar processes of democracy to provide that sort of fellowship that will make worship the foundation of social unity rather than the occasion of ecclesiastical strife."³¹ In those days John T. McNeill was saying, in his *Unitive Protestantism*,³² that "opportunity is for the courageous." How courageous have we been? Have we embraced our ecumenical opportunity with sufficient vigor and imagination? Or have we, with all our progress, been content with a smaller measure of advance than larger commitment would have made possible?

To attempt to answer the question, What is "the nature of the unity we seek?" might require another volume as large as this, if one

were merely to document the testimony of state and local councils. Suffice it here to say that, as never before, councils and groups within them are squarely facing up to that unavoidable question. In earlier years we could dodge it; but now it recurs with cumulative insistence.³³

From Action to Thought

Thirty years ago H. Paul Douglass saw that there was already "a system of nation-wide Protestant federation . . . in the making."³⁴ To his mind, "no other movement rivals the federations in their direct and practical attack on the evils of the divided Church."³⁵ (Note that he did not say "of a divided world," but "of a divided Church.") That system, then only in the making, has now been tremendously extended, outward and upward, so that it is literally a world-wide venture. As William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, so well said, the ecumenical movement has been "the great new fact of our time."

Is the Council movement simply more ecclesiastical machinery? Is it merely an interdenominational administrative addition to the increasingly heavy denominational "overhead"? Is it one more aspect of the "bigness" that has developed in government, education, business, and labor? Is it dynamic and creative, or does it tend to "freeze" the ecclesiastical *status quo*? In what sense is it more Christian than separatism or autonomy, whether parochially exercised or sectarian in its world-wide practice? If we propose to "test our lives," and our culture, by His, how do our cooperative church relationships stand up under analysis? In what sense is "interdenominational" synonymous with "ecumenical"?³⁶

Yet, even though ecumenicity has to face a renaissance of denominationalism, ecumenicity can also easily be sabotaged by increasing parochialism. As John C. Bennett says,³⁷ "The community of Christ . . . never allows us to be merely Americans or people of the political West." By the same token, Jonesville and Middletown have their proper claim on religious loyalties, but a community church that does not look beyond the borders of a community too narrowly defined is in no position to censure denominations with world-wide horizons. The communion of ecumenical saints has to function in space as well as in time; else is it not ecumenical.

Over against sectarian narrowness there could easily grow up an ecclesiastical chauvinism. State and commonwealth provide opulent social differences, but Christ seeks to be Lord of them all. Regionalism can also show jingo traits, and parochialism can afflict Megalopolis and Manhattan as readily as it can Sauk Center. Nevertheless, as Leslie

Newbigin says,³⁸ in East Asia "one discovered . . . a thoroughly positive regionalism." To a lesser extent there are varieties of social and spiritual scene in America itself. Seattle and San Francisco, Indianapolis and Houston, Boston and Atlanta, are richly varied. The problem is: how to conserve the values of the indigenous and the charm of the local idiom without substituting them for the universals with their wider claim. If every denomination, and every church, and every Christian, in every geographical relationship (be its radius short or long), truly belongs to the Church Universal, then ecumenicity has begun to arrive. "The ecumenical community increases to the extent that communication expands among the churches."³⁹

According to Gray,⁴⁰ "Leaders of councils discovered early that many churches are willing to 'do' but are not willing to 'talk.'" Because "the councils have been slow to develop an adequate doctrine of the Church . . . they are discovering that they have made their communities conscious of the churches but not of the Church."⁴¹ (They could develop only pragmatically. Going denominations could talk on a world scale; talk at the local level would have meant no council.)⁴²

"Heretofore," says Gray, "councils of churches have principally been regarded as instruments for cooperative activities among the churches. But there is emerging a concern for their *theological* implications, and a call for the serious study of faith and order in relation to them." He concludes: "While it is understandable that councils up to this point have not been very much concerned with theological meanings, and have thus been extremely slow to develop an adequate doctrine of the Church, this stage of their development is probably past. In order to fulfill their role in the second half of the century, they must correct what has been the lack by which theologians have been most deeply disturbed. It becomes for them the ecumenical necessity."⁴³

Thus the ecumenical necessity is now in the field of thought rather than practice exclusively. For, as Goodsell says,⁴⁴ "Action in any sphere, undirected by sober thinking, is usually either futile or fateful." And Cate maintains that⁴⁵ "Unity in association must be solidified and given duration by a body of common doctrine." (He adds as a hypothesis, "Disunity is a result both of doctrinal and non-doctrinal barriers that block communication between church groups.") And it is interesting to see a state council secretary featuring on the front page of a recent monthly bulletin topics like these: "Technology and Service," "Sociology and Politics," "Theology and the Church."⁴⁶ Here again is an

increasingly thoughtful note as over against too exclusive emphasis on "activism" in years gone. Action is not less, but increasing thought gives it better grounding.

WHAT NEXT?*

The decades covered by this volume have stimulated many adjectives. Goodsell writes⁴⁷ of the "*drear* nineteen-thirties and the *war-rocked* nineteen-forties." (As far as America was concerned, World War I had been a briefer and less severe international earthquake.) According to Hal Boyle, writing at the end of last year,⁴⁸ "the *frantic* 1950's draw to a close. . . . At the start of the decade there were few things you could buy with a penny. And at the end of the decade there were few things you could with a nickle." Brooks Atkinson⁴⁹ found 1959 a "shabby season" in the theater, in which "small plays about small people suit (the) temper of a moody civilization." Now after the "*tremendous* fifties," come the "*amazing* sixties." ⁵⁰ In magazine after magazine they have been called the "*soaring* sixties." But thoughtful analysts also talk about "the gathering haze of the *crucial* 60's."⁵¹ The president of Columbia University thinks posterity may refer to the "*fumbling* fifties" in the United States, and points out that the new decade could turn out to be the "*slumping* sixties."⁵²

The active council secretary would very much "rather make history than record it." To have point, this story should suggest some practical next steps. Three seem obvious:

I. *More Study*, + especially of the state and local councils as a whole.⁵⁶ Such studies might well cover at least seven areas:

- (1) The extent and geography of the movement.⁵⁷
- (2) The structure and relationships of state and local councils.⁵⁸
- (3) The scope and range of their program activities. A first and very difficult question would be, How factorize the facts for statistical analysis and summary? At least nine foci of inquiry immediately suggest themselves: (i) religious education;⁵⁹ (ii) planning and strategy;⁶⁰ (iii) the UCW⁶¹ and UCM⁶² in relation to state and local councils; (iv) missions, home and foreign, as a state and local council task;⁶³ (v) evangelism;⁶⁴ (vi) public relations and communication;⁶⁵ (vii) social welfare;⁶⁶ (viii) human relations, international, inter-racial, interfaith, etc.;⁶⁷ (ix) faith and order.⁶⁸ Such a list could be easily extended.⁶⁹

- (4) Personalities and personnel.⁷⁰

- (5) Budgets and finances; properties.⁷¹
- (6) Particular states and cities.⁷²
- (7) Contemporary constituent attitudes.⁷³
- (8) The varying religious needs of differing communities.⁷⁴

II. *More Conference*

At St. Louis in 1957, when visitors were given a chance to react to NCC reports, they showed a much keener interest in discussing the working of state and local councils. Perhaps it should be frankly recognized that the NCC Assembly should consist of properly qualified delegates, and that the more popular interest should be directed not toward helping the NCC do its work but toward making the state and local aspect of church cooperation more effective and more widespread.

It is now forty years since the last nation-wide conference for the consideration of methods of church cooperation. Has the time come when another carefully planned congress could be held, comparable to those in Pittsburgh in 1917 and Cleveland in 1920? The Oberlin 1957 experience confirms the hope that such a gathering might prove popular and useful. If GCPFO, OCC, and ACS were to collaborate, it would be no very great task to enlist at least 1,000 persons in preliminary studies, to assure a body of material for consideration and discussion at such a congress. Discussion questions might include "The Significance of State and Local Councils from the Standpoint of the World and National Councils,"⁷⁵ and "Should there be some sort of a Council of Councils in addition to the ACS?"⁷⁶ These are only two of the many major questions that need far more serious study than has yet been given them. What is more important than finding answers is more careful thought on all the issues involved, not only by the paid executives of the council movement, but by experienced volunteer officers and division, department, commission, and committee chairmen and members as well.

(III) *More Vigorous Extension*

In Chapter II a national objective of the International Sunday School Association in 1893 was cited as "an effective organization in every township." Ought our objective in 1960 to be any less comprehensive? Whatever the sociological changes and their organizational consequences for geography and structure, ought we not now, more than ever, seek to blanket the entire nation with a network of church cooperation?

It must be confessed that "the cooperative movement in all its forms (local, state, national, and international) has to confront the

fact that very large sectors of Protestantism still hold aloof." While "the climate is . . . changing, we create too rosy a picture unless we take account," humbly, of our only fractional success, even within Protestant ranks.⁷⁷ Fortunately a number of local councils have found themselves able to win the cooperation of many local churches not allied with the national and world councils through their denominations, to the benefit of all concerned; and Divisional cooperation in the National Council is wider than the member bodies of the Council as a whole.

Moreover, impressive as is the number of state and local councils, even more so is the number of places where church cooperation is not yet adequately organized. As long ago as 1931 many of us had become convinced that "extension instead of being a detail on the fringe of things (had) become the central problem of the Federal Council."⁷⁸ Is it not now at least *a* central problem of the National Council?

Rural America is overchurched;—in many instances fewer churches would serve the community better. How can the denominations face this clear obligation with statesmanship, tact, patience, and courage? Is there a better instrument than the state councils of churches for building a sounder strategy for the more adequate churching of America under the counsel of the denominations cooperating in the National Council? Nowhere is the fragmented condition of the Church more in evidence than in the tragic inadequacy of little competitive churches, infrequent in their services, manned in many instances by non-resident pastors. Here is obvious opportunity for ecumenical statesmanship.

Even if all the churches ought to continue to exist, they would do far more effective work cooperatively than in isolation. Ministerial acquaintance is not enough. The rank and file of the membership need to acquire not only denominational loyalty, but some sense of The Great Church. The number of places of more than 5,000 inhabitants without councils of churches gives us a vast potential for the extension of church cooperation. With proper teamwork, at every level, by all the partners to the ecumenical enterprise, the number of councils of churches with volunteer leadership could easily be doubled. The number of councils with paid leadership would then more or less automatically increase, given proper field service.

How can the resources be found to add to the OCC staff the long-needed person to help state councils organize volunteer local councils? Doubling the number of volunteer councils would create many familiar problems of counsel, guidance, and the preservation of weak organiza-

tions through the vicissitudes of personnel change, especially among pastors, but difficulties should not be permitted to obscure opportunity and responsibility. Do the denominations and the councils really want to extend local and state cooperation? If they do, it can be done.

One person could easily spend all his time helping state councils cultivate ministerial associations and other local organizations, with a view to their slow expansion into more inclusive councils of churches. Even the slower spontaneous developments in the communities of less than metropolitan size will sooner or later force the employment of more coordinating staff. With greater opportunity than ever, the field staff now available is no larger than it was decades ago. Has not the time come for another advance?

There is doubtless room for honest difference of opinion as to whether emphasis should now be put on extending church cooperation by organizing new councils, or whether councils already existent should first rethink their reasons for existence, their programs and objectives, and the theology of interdenominational action, with its consequences for the meaning of the Church. Are not both courses to be followed?

The time is surely over-ripe for a more profound analysis of what church cooperation is all about. On the other hand, is it a time for coasting, in terms of the extension of the agencies of cooperation? As Seifert puts it,⁷⁹ "short steps ahead become long steps backward when the ground is rushing forward beneath our feet." Relatively, ought we not to do better than hold our own? Are state councils encouraging the growth of local councils? Are state councils giving adequate representative status to established local councils?

Can we recover the promotional and extension enthusiasms of half a century ago? If we do not, we could let the wonderful Interchurch Center, where people from near and far gather together joyously around cafeteria tables, in a sort of every-day ecumenical interchurch luncheon, become merely a monument to denominationalism, as certain European temples of international aspiration have served to enshrine a type of nationalism now outmoded in the minds of all penetrating analysts of the world crisis. In a world that could blow up at any minute, it is lesser loyalties, however rich our several heritages, that must prove their case. To put too much emphasis on the plural in churches is to fall into a sort of ecclesiastical polytheism quite inadequate to a time like ours. Is not a pantheon of autonomous denominations a rather impotent sort of anarchy in a jet-atomic age? In America too, as well as in lands where Christian communities

clamor for union, is not something more needed than "the outworn regalia of American denominationalism?"⁸⁰

On the other hand, any attempted action outside the interdenominationally authorized channels, or action in any sense un- or anti-denominational, would seem as improper as it is unnecessary, undesirable, and ineffective; but the conclusion is unavoidable that truly denominational representatives now face the opportunity and the duty to transcend the limits of denominationalism while conserving the richness of every denominational heritage.

We Feel Our Way

To what do we look forward? Some think a group of national experts should tell us; the more experienced are more modest. We do not know what lies ahead. The number of major denominations may be sharply reduced during the next century. The possibility of new groupings, at first of an independent sort, with some of them soon more and more assimilated to the general type of American denominationalism, is equally clear. In any case, the need for church cooperation at every level will increase rather than decrease.

We cannot yet spell out the exact "Nature of the Unity We Seek." Is it not high time, however, that we confer more earnestly, and more open-mindedly, about so basic an issue? Not to know all the answers is no sign of weakness or ignorance. The general secretary of the WCC is sure that "while active collaboration . . . is an important part of the common calling of the churches, it is by no means the whole of that calling. Cooperation in service and witness has its own specific value, but it must not become a substitute for the realization of that fuller *Koinonia* and unity which is meant in John 17 and Ephesians 4."⁸¹

On this there would doubtless be agreement; but on the implementation of the implicit ideal there is room for wide disagreement. Therefore the WCC Central Committee at its August 1959 session, in considering the future of faith and order,⁸² was clear that "The basic issues are not in the first place issues of organization, but issues of ecclesiology. We have come to a period in the development of the ecumenical movement when once again (as in Toronto in 1950) we have to define more clearly what exactly is the function of the World Council with regard to church unity." If this be true of the WCC, with the Lausanne tradition as part of its heritage, how much more is it true of state and local councils in the United States, where the tradition has been so overwhelmingly one of Life and Work. This would seem to be a time for study, hard thinking, prayerful quest, enriching fellow-

ship, rather than precipitate conclusions. We have been a long time separating; the reuniting process will not be easy or sudden, even though desirable and inevitable. Fortunately it is our Father's good pleasure to *give* us the Kingdom. We need not try in our own little wisdom to fashion the Larger Church that is to be; the Head of the Church will build it.

Our Times and Our Churches are in His Hands

Now that the World Council has been organized, the interest of all Cooperative Christianity supports the association of the denominations in National Councils of Churches. Now that the NCCCUSA has been organized, there is certainly nationwide interest in the strengthening of state councils of churches. Now that most of the states are organized, it ought surely to be a major concern of state councils of churches that local councils should be organized on an appropriate basis in every place where the Kingdom and the community would be served by such interchurch organizations.

The earliest roots of cooperation were at the local and state level. The national and world organizations have greatly improved the ecclesiastical climate, but the urge for cooperation began at the grass-roots. Says one of our most experienced, consecrated, and well-loved national leaders, "I believe the grass-roots movement helped in shaping or really interacted with other factors to make possible or force cooperation at the national level, or I would not have given 30 years to the work."

Somewhere along the road we have discovered that though "churches can cooperate without being changed, they cannot participate in the total mission of the Church without their life being transformed."⁸³ If sometimes this long story may seem like only another power struggle, between churches organized denominationally and churches organized territorially, it will be well to remember that in Christ there are neither denominations nor geography. As Visser 't Hooft reminded us in his Oberlin sermon,⁸⁴ *God in Christ still takes the initiative*. As long as all our churches serve Him, the exact nature of their relationships to one another can be left not merely to human compromise, but also to divine guidance. Our cooperative strategy can limit our ecclesiastical anarchy, but called pilgrims should be friendly. Given basic friendliness, under the banner of our One Lord, all the problems of cooperative relationships, at the local, state, national, and world levels, would seem to be on their way to solution. For "He will complete what He has begun."⁸⁵

* *A Suggested Procedure.* This entire section ("What Next?") was roughed out before the writer had any adequate knowledge of a whole series of events that took place in the NCC in late 1959. These included such varied happenings as:

The Consultation on Long-Range Planning, called and sponsored by GCPFO, held at Atlantic City November 4-6, 1959; the Consultation on Personnel Needs in Church Planning and Research, Indianapolis, November 10-20, 1959; the special meeting of GCPFO and the Advisory Committee for OCC at Detroit December 3, 1959; and the Joint Assembly of DFM and DHM, held at Atlantic City December 7-11, 1959.

The records of these meetings show that the problems raised in this volume are very much in the thinking of all NCC leaders, whether denominationally or interdenominationally employed or related. Even the sovereignty, durability, and adequacy of the denominations as such is certainly to the fore, as never before.⁵³ Moreover, Section I of what follows ("More Study") was written before the 1959 ACS minutes, including the excellent report of the Committee on Studies,⁵⁴ and the action of the ACS setting up an enlarged committee and study program, were available. So much the more significant are this writer's conclusions as to the need and opportunity for study, reached after nearly two years' intensive perusal of the historical data afforded by the church cooperation movement. They strongly support, in principle, the widely publicized Wickizer proposal.⁵⁵

In effect, this whole volume is a report to the ACS Committee on History. In authorizing its publication, the ACS has only received it for study, by its own members and other interested persons. *Perhaps the History Committee would like to refer to the ACS, and through it to the ACS Executive Committee, the careful consideration of the proposals for study and action that follow.*

† *Other Suggested Referrals:*

What immediately follows might properly be referred eventually to the Committee on Studies, for such action as they may see fit to take, in the light of the DHM proposals for 1960-1963 and of the faith and order ecclesiological study. Similarly, any suggested administrative procedures might ultimately be referred to the Advisory Committee of OCC, and if deemed worthy, by that body to GCPFO, in the hope that ACS and the Faith and Order Department of the NCC would also be involved in any long-range planning along the lines suggested. The purpose of this final section of the history is not to

blueprint details but to indicate a possible sense of direction, with the hope that the obvious expectancy of the Committee on Studies may prove wholly justified.

Supporting this hope are such statements as those made by Dean Jerald C. Brauer of the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, in connection with the installation of Lemuel Petersen at Seattle. While Dean Brauer insisted that *informal* representation "is a luxury (councils of churches) can no longer afford," he was equally sure that councils "can perform even greater service" and that "local (and presumably state) councils are entering the most crucial period in their history. They have vast new opportunities." (See *FC Outlook*, February, 1959, p. 8). This entire historical sketch seems to its writer to support this thesis. Wherefore the plea for accelerated momentum, along with profounder thinking.

Two dangers seem equally real. *We can be too impatient*, without justification. State and local council leaders will do well to join with NCC leaders in genuine *long-range* thinking. The problems of schedule mechanics, etc., involved, do not permit any quick, easy solution. On the other hand, *we can be too content with things as they are*. Personnel steeped in the denominational process will not understand the problems of state and local councils unless these are brought to their attention respectfully, loyally, but courageously and clearly. What is here sought is action as well as discussion, extension as well as enrichment.

REFERENCE NOTES

Chapter X

- ¹ *Saturday Review*, April 23, 1959, from a talk at the dedication of the Colgate University Library. (The importance and the limitations of what happens at the United Nations Building may well serve as a restraining hand on extravagant claims of interdenominational progress, as well as a beacon toward ventures of co-operative effort yet to be undertaken.)
- ² These figures are not exact: New York City has a number of councils; and some places are effectively served by councils in larger areas. However, the extent of the "unorganized" field is clear.
- ³ Ralph Canfield McAfee, long-time executive secretary (Portland, Ore., Kansas City, Mo., and Detroit, Mich., councils) and urban church pastor, amending language submitted to him by this writer; in a personal letter, February 24, 1959.
- ⁴ Two interfaith tendencies have been at work simultaneously. One, in the direction of greater mutual appreciation, has expressed itself in The National Conference of Christians and Jews, which soon swung away from its early FC moorings. The other has issued in movements like Protestants and Other Americans United.
- ⁵ *Ecumenical Review*, April, 1959, *World Council Diary*, p. 324.
- ⁶ At Minneapolis, 1926; *FC Bulletin*, January 1927.
- ⁷ W. W. Richardson, R. I., correspondent, *The Christian Century*, Nov. 4, 1959, p. 1292.
- ⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 251.
- ⁹ Also co-secretary of the 18th Ecumenical Student Conference of the National Student Christian Federation, held in Athens, Ohio, December 27, 1959, to January 2, 1960; in an article in *The United Church Herald*, January 21, 1960.
- ¹⁰ Introd. to Wm. B. Cate: "Theoretical and Practical Aspects of Ecumenical Communication," Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1953. Introd., vi, 305 pp., and abstract.
- ¹¹ *United Church Herald*, November 12, 1959, p. 3.
- ¹² *1869 Convention Report*, p. 153.
- ¹³ Cited by Frank Mason North, in *The Methodist Review*, September-October, 1905.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ Handy, *op. cit.*, p. 28, citing "Cooperation in Home Missions" (undated).
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 28.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.
- ¹⁸ Macfarland, *Christian Unity in the Making*, p. 182.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- ²⁰ At times this was even at the expense of the prophetic, as "the price you pay for co-operation." (J. M. Artman, in *FC Bulletin*, October, 1931, editorial.) From the standpoint of the objective sociologist, functional cooperation was a legitimate end in itself. In his influential book *The Community* (Association Press, 1921), Dr. Artman had said, "Unfortunately, (church) federations have been largely nominal not functional" (p. 165).
- ²¹ Cf. the hope expressed by one nationally influential churchman in 1951 that this history might help state and local councils to be something more than "errand boys of the denomination."
- ²² "From Missions to Mission" by Virgil A. Sly in his address before the DFM, NCC, December 7-10, 1958, in Pittsburgh. Printed in full in *The Christian Evangelist-Front Rank*, October 25, 1959, pp. 1352 ff.; cf. also *Information Service*, February 28, 1959. At the same DFM Assembly John Coventry

Smith, associate general secretary of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, said, "If the Baptists and Methodists are strong in Burma, there is no reason why a Presbyterian should be unhappy until he also established a Presbyterian work in that country. The work of the whole church belongs to all of us" (*Information Service*, February 28, 1959). (Isn't the same true of Jonesville, USA?) Cf. also the address by Truman B. Douglass, a year earlier, already cited.

- 23 *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, p. 88.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p. 278.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 255.
- 26 *Ibid.*, p. 258.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 275.
- 28 Cf. Lewis S. Mudge, art. on "World Confessionalism and Ecumenical Strategy" (*Ecumenical Review*, July, 1959, Vol. XI, No. 4, p. 383). "Denominationalism is something essentially pre-ecumenical." (The problem would seem to be: How make the resurgence of denominational loyalties an asset rather than a liability?)
- 29 "The Status of Church Cooperation," by this writer, *Religious Education*, September, 1931, pp. 530 ff.
- 30 Cf. Lindeman, *The Community*, p. 24: "When an institution comes to think more of its own advancement than of the advancement of the community, it is out of harmony with true progress."
- 31 Art. cited in note 29.
- 32 Abingdon, 1930.
- 33 For an exceptionally well-informed and competent review of all that is here involved, cf. "The Ecumenical Movement—Retrospect and Prospect," by Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, *The Ecumenical Review*, April, 1958, pp. 311 ff.
- 34 *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, p. 213.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 280.
- 36 This writer has tried to edit out of the first portion of this book all use of "ecumenical" where "cooperative" or "interdenominational" was meant. The word "ecumenical" does creep in, especially in quoted statements, where it is sometime either an anachronism or inaccurate. There is now an increasingly careless use of the word, which should be guarded against, lest it lose its significant meaning.
- 37 *Christian Century*, December 13, 1959, p. 1502.
- 38 In a December, 1959, International Missionary Council general letter.
- 39 Cate, *op. cit.*
- 40 *Op. cit.*, p. 171.
- 41 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- 42 Minear, *The Nature of the Unity We Seek*, p. 209; cited by Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 174.
- 43 The response to this need begins to appear. E.g., when Lemuel Peterson was installed as executive secretary of the Greater Seattle Council of Churches on February 1, 1959, he presented a distinguished paper on "Seeking Christian Unity in Greater Seattle" (10 pp., mimeographed), in which he drew on much recent Faith and Order literature. Cf. also "As the Secretary Sees It," Harlan M. Frost, in the *Newsletter* of the Council of Churches of Buffalo and Erie County, N.Y., January, 1959; "Why do and should churches work together? . . . We work together because we cannot do otherwise. The love of Christ constraineth us."
- 44 *Op.cit.*, App. III, *Toward a Theology of Missions*, p. 275.
- 45 *Op. cit.*
- 46 Vernon M. MacNeill in *Illinois Church Councilor*, December, 1959.
- 47 *Op. cit.*, p. 62.

- ⁴⁸ AP to *Boston Traveller*, December 29, 1959.
- ⁴⁹ *NY Times*, January 3, 1960.
- ⁵⁰ *Cumberland Presbyterian*, January 19, 1960.
- ⁵¹ Martin E. Marty, *Christian Century*, January 6, 1960.
- ⁵² *NY Times*, January 8, 1960.
- ⁵³ Elsa Kruuse, Office of Information, NCC.
- ⁵⁴ Dr. Cate's paper (27 pp.) on "The Institutionalism of the Church as it Affects Ecumenical Communication in the Local Community," a contribution to a large WCC Faith and Order study, while only in tentative draft, provided a particularly thoughtful analysis deserving wide consideration. It is an excellent example of the respect a local council (Portland, Ore.) secretary can command, on the basis of real scholarship reenforced by practical administrative experience.
- ⁵⁵ Willard M. Wickizer, vice president of the NCC for home missions, called for a six-year "comprehensive study of American life," with a "Convocation on the Mission of the Church in America" in 1963, which might be attended by thousands of Protestants.
- ⁵⁶ National Council records will be carefully kept. Individual state and local council archives from now on are likely to be faithfully maintained. It is high time, however, that we begin to regularize the gathering of facts that will make possible "new generalizations" of a far more thoroughgoing sort than anybody is now equipped to assemble.
- ⁵⁷ Could we have a year book giving details comparable to those provided in denominational summaries, with the integers not the local churches or groups of churches (synods, conferences, dioceses, conventions, and the like) but state and local councils of churches?
- ⁵⁸ This field needs a fresh, new, objective approach. Empirical study of basic constitutional similarities and differences, and of administrative practices, other than matters of specific program activities and finance, might throw great light on the meaning of the movement, and its needs and opportunities.
- ⁵⁹ Contemporary organizational structures, functions, personnel, etc. E.g., attention to age and sex groups.
- ⁶⁰ Is the NCC able to strengthen this original aim of many state and local councils of churches? If so, how? By the action of denominational extension boards, or by the plenary action of the communions themselves, or both? Probably such an inquiry would require at least one, perhaps a whole series of specialized conferences.
- ⁶¹ ⁶² Up-to-date appraisals are needed.
- ⁶³ What contact do state and local councils have with DHM, DFM, IMC, and other national and international agencies? If the "Mission" of the Church involves united action, can state and local councils omit "missions" from their program? How can they most effectively supplement denominational activity in missionary work?
- ⁶⁴ What are the actual and desirable roles of state and local councils in evangelism? Perhaps the NCC Department of Evangelism would be interested to share in such an inquiry.
- ⁶⁵ Including house organs, the media of mass communication, etc. Here again various NCC units may be interested.
- ⁶⁶ Nature and extent of specialized personnel, activity, and budgets. Certainly the NCC would be interested here.
- ⁶⁷ This inquiry should be cleared with the proposed post-Oberlin ecclesiological study. How much attention are state and local councils actually giving to the study of the meaning of the Church? With what results?
- ⁶⁸ Summaries of experiences in this field, and suggestions as to council responsibility, would seem appropriate. As one NCC leader puts it, theology is often used as an alibi for separateness maintained on quite other grounds. So Dr. C. C. Morrison (*Christian Century*, December 23, 1959) writes of "the

- comfortable illusion that the cause of our continuing dividedness is doctrinal." J. Robert Nelson (*ibid.*) deplores the fact that our "brotherhood in Christ remains a fractured fraternity because of ecclesiastical schism"; but Dr. Goodsell (*op. cit.*, p. 276) believes that "the old era of theological isolation is drawing to a close." Field studies, with precise instruments of measurements, could establish the facts, empirically observed.
- 69 Program study might also include such matter as: Departmentalization in larger councils, as the result of the proliferation of functions; special problems of smaller councils, where the leadership, whether paid or volunteer, must be of the "generalist" sort, but needs the counselling services of more specialized personnel (the role of the "amateur" and of the "expert"); additional or revised program guides, or a new manual of program possibilities.
 - 70 Suggested sub-topics: Effective leaders in the past—as many write-ups as possible, on the basis of suggested criteria, plus unique individual contributions; elements of present effectiveness in leadership; choosing and training leaders; professional standards; placement problems and practices; adequate pensions.
 - 71 Suggested sub-topics: Facts, and their meaning; suggested procedures and principles; additional field service; office headquarters, rented and owned; (this subject alone ought to produce at least one, perhaps several useful volumes).
 - 72 Such a study would involve establishing criteria of choice, method of treatment, enlistments of analysts, including graduate students, in seminaries and in university social sciences.
 - 73 Social distance tests, such as those used in *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, might well be used; also questionnaires as to program interest, and the significance attached to the council movement by constituents. New data could be compared with those gathered just prior to 1930.
 - 74 This is partly a matter of method, but even more of attitude, involving an empirical approach to cooperative function.
 - 75 Without anticipating what careful group study might discover, two assertions may be ventured. (i) More important than how many of what sort, and how chosen, is the question of *why* representatives of state and local councils in the NCC should be chosen. (ii) This whole problem could prove to be one of communication rather than of votes, largely, if not wholly. State and local councils are not now interested in acquiring status as "accredited auxiliaries" of the NCC. What they seek is a more adequate method of sharing their experiences and insights, both with the NCC and with each other.
 - 76 Cf. Harold E. Fey: "Councils of Churches should be encouraged instead of discouraged to form a national organization of Councils of Churches" (in "Ecumenical Christianity in Urban America," pp. 42-49 of the *American Baptist Urban Convocation Report*, Indianapolis, 1957, p. 48.)
 - 77 Letter from Dr. Cavert, previously cited.
 - 78 Personal letter, this writer to Dr. Guild, January 3, 1931.
 - 79 Harvey Seifert, "A Christian Reappraisal of Realism in Foreign Policy," in *Religion In Life*, Winter, 1959-60, pp. 75 ff. Capable of significant translation into the field of interdenominational policy.
 - 80 *Op. cit.*, p. 248.
 - 81 *Ecumenical Review*, October, 1959, p. 73.
 - 82 *Ibid.*, p. 102.
 - 83 *Ibid.*, p. 125.
 - 84 September 8, 1957 (Minear, *op. cit.*, pp. 121 ff.)
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Chapters III to VIII make frequent use of *published* Federal Council annual reports and quadrennial summaries, containing minutes of its executive and administrative committees, and of its commissions; and its *Year Books* (various titles and editors).

Chapters V to VII make large use of *materials on file* at the Office for Councils of Churches, including:

- Minutes of the Commission on Inter-Church Federations (State and Local), and of its Committee of Direction;
Minutes of the Association of Executive Secretaries;
Folders of supplementary data, including correspondence, chronologically arranged;
Other folders of material filed by states and communities.

Chapter VI cites the *Council News Letter*;

The FC Committee on Extension of State and Local Cooperation minutes;
the ICRE Board of Field Administration minutes.

Chapter VII utilizes the minutes of the
Federal Council Field Department;
ICRE Committee on Field Program;
Inter-Council Field Committee;
Inter-Council Field Department;
Employed Council Officers' Association
and *Church Federation Field*.

Chapter VII consults the minutes of the Association of Council Secretaries, and the files of *Christendom* and *The Church Woman*.

Chapter IX uses the minutes of the
DCE Educational Services Commission, NCC;
Central Department of Field Administration;
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NCC Work Books;
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NCC Outlook, and *Interchurch News*;
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Chapter X cites numerous other periodicals.

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If other seminary libraries have materials of this sort, a note to the Office for Councils of Churches, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N.Y., would be a courtesy.

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APPENDIX I

Two Outstanding Local Councils

These two councils have been chosen because of the recent retirement of their distinguished executives, because they illustrate what has happened in the last two decades, because of available historical summaries, and to illustrate the merger process. The list could easily be multiplied by at least ten, to include a score or more of significant local demonstrations of church cooperation of long standing.

1. *Buffalo and Erie County, N.Y.*—Harlan M. Frost

Eric F. Goldman, writing in the January 1960 *Harper's*, called the 1950's a "stuffy decade." In terms of Buffalo church cooperation the facts were quite otherwise. During these years the growth of the Council of Churches, under the long leadership (1944-1959) of Dr. Frost, was conspicuous.

In June 1951 *The Christian Century*, in an article on "Christian Church Cooperation in Buffalo—A Study of a Successful Council of Churches," said, "To know Dr. Frost is to understand the position of trusted leadership the council holds in the life of the churches and the city. His notable traits of humility, sincerity, and democratic spirit are at the heart of great Christian leadership. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with Phi Beta Kappa honors in 1915. After completing his theological training at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, he served pastorates in Minnesota, New York, and Ohio. At the end of a ten-year pastorate in Toledo, he was elected executive secretary of the Toledo Council of Churches in 1934. (Some of us still remember his exceptional counsel on "Undergirding Spiritually" at the 1936 joint sessions of the AES and ECOA.) In 1914 he was called to head the Federal Council's commission on camp and defense communities. When he came to Buffalo the budget of the Council was \$17,000. Now it is four times as large." The 1959 budget was \$110,354, with cash on hand January 31, 1958, in double the amount of the total budget when Dr. Frost went to Buffalo.

That this growth resulted from the labors of many others is part of the administrative leadership of this well-loved, representative executive, as well as evidence of the progress of the entire movement during the decade, in program, in personnel, and in support.

The Erie County Sabbath School Association was organized December 3, 1857. In 1886 its name was changed to the Erie County Sunday School Association.

The Interchurch Council of Women was organized in 1911.

Taking over a \$600 debt from the local Men and Religion Movement, the Buffalo Federation of Churches was organized April 15, 1913. Its Committee on Religious Education paralleled the County Sunday School Association.

As early as 1916 thought and effort were expended to bring the Association and the Federation together. On April 1, 1930, the Sunday School Association became the Department of Religious Education of the Federation of Churches.

In 1941, when it was given its fine new home, the Federation sought incorporation as the Council of Churches.

Any adequate history of church cooperation in the city and county would wish to go into details concerning its earlier secretaries: Edward C. Fellowes (1913-1916), C. McLeod Smith (1916-1921), Lewis G. Rogers (acting 1921-1923), Don D. Tullis (1923-1930), John A. Vollenweider (1931-1934), Ross W. Sanderson (1937-1942). (It will be noted that there were repeated "interim" periods, between full-time executives.) After the International Sunday School Convention in Buffalo in 1918, R. George Lord was moved from part-time to full-time as County Sunday School Association executive (1918-1924), and his successor, Benton S. Swartz, is gratefully remembered. If only a few lay persons were to be listed, the names of Edwards D. Emerson, George T. Ballachey, and Ralph E. Smith would surely be included; so would Mrs. Albert F. Laub, donor of the Council property, and Mrs. Fred H. White, long secretary of the Council of Church Women. A long list of local clergy would include Bishop Cameron J. Davis, and many others.

The Federation's initial budget (1913-1914) was \$3,200. In 1919-1920 a \$20,000 budget was reduced to \$16,640. In 1921 salary arrearages had reached \$1,000, bringing about an interim arrangement. In 1923-1924, according to Dr. Tullis, "More than once this year the salaries of the staff have been a thousand dollars in arrears . . . rent as much as three months back." In the 1924-1925 budget of \$21,000, a debt item of \$6,600 was included. By 1929-1930 the budget was up to \$24,000, and the debt reduced to \$2,500. The first merged budget (1930-1931) was \$35,000; but by October 1933 there were liabilities amounting to \$8,452.41. The close of the Sunday School Association's separate existence was marked by sharp shrinkage in payments on pledges, excessive cost of solicitation and collection, and expenses incurred on the basis of expected rather than actual income. The Federation's financial situation, though difficult, was somewhat better, and its income larger. Part of the problem of councils like this has been the relation of city to county, in terms of service, support, and structure. The sociology of this and many other metropolitan counties has changed rapidly in recent decades, involving the sudden transformation of rural churches and neighborhoods to suburban.

Since his retirement in June 1959 Dr. Frost has been working part-time to help develop a stronger program for the councils in Niagara Falls and Lockport. He has been succeeded at Buffalo by Paul Anderson Collyer, former missionary to China and the Philippines, under the American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society, more recently in charge of Latin American and European distributions for the American Bible Society.

2. *Pittsburgh Consolidates*—Employs O. M. Walton

Similarly, if one local council and one executive were to be chosen to exemplify the perplexities, achievements, and expectations of the 1940's, it would be hard to find a better example than that afforded by Pittsburgh and its O. M. Walton.

The Pittsburgh Sunday School Union was organized in 1817, the Allegheny County Sabbath School Union in 1889. The Protestant Ministerial Union dates from 1900. After an Evangelistic Committee (1912-1916), and a Christian Social Service Union (from 1913), and a City Missions Council (from 1914) had been organized, the first Pittsburgh Council of Churches dated from 1916. With it a Week-Day Religious Education organization (from 1940) and the County

Sabbath School Association were merged in 1913, after two years of functional cooperation, to form (what has been called since 1955) The Council of Churches of the Pittsburgh Area. A Council of Church Women was organized in 1946. In 1956 the Area Council acquired its own Headquarters Building. In October 1959 the Council celebrated the 200th anniversary of the founding of Pittsburgh by a Bicentennial Rally of the church forces of the area.

In a succession of Pittsburgh leaders, including Dr. Charles Reed Zahniser and Dr. J. Kirkwood Craig, the name of O. M. Walton, executive director from 1945 until his retirement in 1957, stands out as the embodiment of the solid accomplishments of cooperative churchmanship in the American city. Graduating from Oberlin College in 1916, Mr. Walton later spent five years (1920-1924) in the Central and Lakewood branches of the Cleveland YMCA. In 1929, after five years as educational minister of the Lakewood Methodist Church, "O. M." (now with an M. A. from Northwestern) became religious education director of the Federated Churches of Cleveland, and was ordained in 1930. When depression conditions forced staff reductions on that organization, Mr. Walton served for four years (1932-1936) as the able church editor of *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, an experience that later served him in good stead. Returning to the Federation in 1936, after seven months of service as acting executive during the illness of his chief, in early 1937 he succeeded Dr. Don D. Tullis in the executive secretaryship. Eight years later Pittsburgh called him.

A competent church administrator, with several types of specialized ability, Mr. Walton has also been a civic leader of outstanding stature. In his ministerial service in the local church when the cooperative movement was young and relatively small, as educational worker and senior executive during the difficult 1930's, and as executive director in a metropolitan council for more than a decade during the years when American Protestantism was achieving new cooperative unity, he won friends and influenced people by sterling worth and sturdy achievements. Since his retirement "O. M." followed Frank Jennings (retired Massachusetts executive) as interim secretary for the Ohio Council of Churches. He also compiled the *Story of Religion in the Pittsburgh Area* (72 pp. Committee on Religion of the Pittsburgh Bicentennial Association). His "interests and activities have extended across the lines of faith and denominations. In May 1958 he was awarded a certificate of recognition for leadership in the fields of human relations and religious brotherhood by the Pittsburgh Chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews."

The reason for this award is reflected in the final paragraph of Mr. Walton's "Summation" of the story of organized religions in Pittsburgh: "The test for the future will lie, not so much in the richness and variety of the houses of worship we build, nor in the zealotry with which we keep them separate and inviolable, but in how we share the treasures they represent and how we demonstrate the qualities of religious living through amity, good will, and the creation of a more righteous community." Here church cooperation becomes interfaith community-mindedness.

Pittsburgh and Walton symbolize quiet expectancy and hopes still being fulfilled, under the leadership of his colleague and successor, Robert L. Kincheloe.

APPENDIX II

Some Sample State Stories

1. *Massachusetts*

Organized Sunday school work in the Bay State goes back to 1854 or 1855. In 1869 it was reported that the commonwealth would soon hold its fifteenth annual convention. In 1875 a regular Saturday meeting was held in Boston to study the uniform lesson, which by 1872 "was carrying everything before it." Another meeting was held in Cambridge. Four or five hundred persons attended each week, "rubbing out our sectarian lines for the hour."

Partly because of the relative unimportance of the county in New England, only two Massachusetts counties were organized in 1875. By 1878 it was reported that a high percentage of all church additions were from the Sunday school.

Four thousand people were present at an 1889 meeting in Boston, and 60 conventions were reported. The movement had sought to provide a district meeting within reach of every school. A full-time worker was employed. By 1893 "the workers in Massachusetts are proving the proposition, take care of the township and county organization, and the state organization will take care of itself." The work was reorganized in 1889, with 53 districts; and by 1889 the organization was reported "thorough." In 1902 most of these districts had maintained their organization, and all but three had done good work. In 1900 complete reports came from 29. All but six held conventions at least annually, some of them more often. Contributions in 1904 amounted to nearly \$10,000.

Among state federations of churches that have survived uninterruptedly, Massachusetts, the earliest, was organized March 31, 1902. Massachusetts Church Federation history divides itself into four main periods; only the first of these will be noted here in any detail.

(1) *The E. T. Root Era, to 1930.*

Dr. Root's unpublished manuscript and other materials (many of them printed) amply document this period. Dr. Root was primarily interested in people: "Comity and cooperation are means; and the end is not even 'successful' federations, denominations, or churches, but the perfecting of individuals and their communities." He testified that in spite of "the complexity and novel difficulties of interdenominational cooperation, involving constant salesmanship to individuals and congregations," and "much travel," "my health improved." He early "learned, in interviews and addresses, to appeal to the premises of each denomination." It was the official commitment of the churches themselves, not the cooperation of individuals, which gave significance "to a federation of churches, local, state, or national. This—not achievements however brilliant, not leaders, voluntary or salaried, however able, not the size of the budget—is its *esse*; these other things, however desirable, contribute to its *bene esse*." A federation's "best work is to better (the churches') work. It is not their rival but their joint agency, maintaining and strengthening them, until, two by two, and ultimately all, they merge into one ecclesiastical organization." He recognized ecclesiasticism as a reality.

"During its first five years, work in Massachusetts would have collapsed but for the base of operations in Rhode Island," where Dr. Root lived in a

rented summer cottage, two miles from the railroad. In 1909 the Congregationalists of Massachusetts agreed to give 50¢ per church, or \$300, to the Federation. In 1913 this amount was raised to \$1 per year per church as an asking from each denomination. In 1906 the amount raised was \$552; in 1907, \$343; 1908, \$214; 1909, \$1,149. At the end of 1912 the Federation owed the secretary \$715. In 1914 the "quota" was raised to \$2 per church, and \$2,836 was received. The 1915 budget of \$4,000 was not reached.

As a matter perhaps not unrelated was the fact that Barnstable County had one church for every 295 inhabitants. "Lowell, with a Protestant population no larger than 60 years ago, is attempting to maintain three times as many churches." In 1920 the secretary's salary was increased to \$2,400. Half of his time was contributed to the rural survey of the state by the Interchurch World Movement, as it had been in previous years to the Committee on the Moral Aims of the War. The total raised in 1920 was \$4,930; in 1922, it was \$5,608, with all bills paid; in 1924, \$8,374.

In 1925 Kenneth MacArthur was added to the staff, and \$14,742 was spent. In 1926 the amount raised was \$15,066. In 1928 religious education became a department, but the formal merger of the Sunday school forces and the Church Federation did not take place until 1933. By 1930 Dr. Root had seen the income grow from \$200 to \$21,000. Congregational Superintendent F. E. Emrich had quoted John R. Commons: "The two faults of American Protestantism are its *overlapping and its overlooking*." Dr. Root rang the changes on these words, adding "and its overorganizing." He reported 1,199 Protestants in an urban "parish" distributed among 46 churches in 14 denominations—the church that had the most could claim only one-fifth of the total. "If there were found a village of 1,000 inhabitants with 46 churches, would it not be a scandal? Yet such is the overlapping in cities."

"The Federation is not a society, but the churches themselves consulting and cooperating. But . . . givers were accustomed to societies," and gave more to entertain a single convention than to the annual budget of a state federation. "The Federation had rivals and even enemies. I suspect that strong supporters of the Sunday School Association regard me as a deserter; and feared that the Federation with its broader program, if it gained a foothold, would absorb religious education, as it has done." "The Federation was judged by standards set for philanthropic organizations; in fact it was a council of the denominations to change the conditions created by their self-centered institutionalism." In 1929 it seemed "easier to secure from individuals contributions for special lines of work than for overhead expenses." So wrote E. Tallmadge Root, in 1940 and the years following.

This earliest (Root) period has been featured partly because it is so easily forgotten, partly because it exhibited such penetrating insight into continuing problems and opportunities. Later periods include:

- (2) *The Period of the Merger;*
- (3) *The Frank Jennings Administration (1935-1952);*
- (4) *The Forrest Knapp Administration.*

Much published and private material is available on Massachusetts church cooperation since 1902, including files of *Facts and Figures*, *Bay State Church Life*, and *The Christian Outlook*, as well as Minutes. Here, with abundant his-

torical library resources, is a rich field for some church history major to explore in a doctoral dissertation.

2. *Missouri*

As Massachusetts is enriched and complicated by the dominance of Boston, and Maryland by that of Baltimore, so Missouri is both the beneficiary and the victim of having two metropolitan cities within its borders: St. Louis and Kansas City.

When seemingly in 1865 "a small group of men in St. Louis gathered together to help each other find better methods and plans for the Sunday school, that was the beginning of the Missouri Sunday School Association" (historical memo by H. W. Becker). "The first statewide convention was held in October 1866." According to a 1915 Golden Jubilee Convention report, as early as 1869, with 80 out of 114 counties organized, "the Finance Committee reported a debt of \$1,000," but it recommended the employment of a "state missionary," if funds could be found. In 1872 the office of State Agent was created by the Convention; but "not until 1886-7 does it appear that any salaries were paid." In 1878 the chairman of the state convention advised the organization of the townships first, believing that county organizations amounted to little without township cooperation. In 1891 the first state superintendent was employed, and three field agents served under him. A most aggressive decade began in 1888. In 1893 "all the 114 counties were reported organized." Of \$12,438.41 expended, \$8,290.68 came from St. Louis. There was a staff of ten persons, mostly full-time. When the Seventh International Convention met in St. Louis in 1893, the Missouri Sunday School Association, incorporated that year, "claimed to lead the entire field."

In the 1890's the hard times produced a "slump"; in 1898 receipts had dropped to \$3,432.29, liabilities were \$4,453.83, and there was no field force. In 1896 it was reported, "We believe in the international system of Bible study as the very best means man can employ to discharge the high duty to which he is called by the spirit breathed in the earnest prayer of our loving Lord recorded in the Gospel of St. John, 17th chapter 21st verse." In 1902 there were "struggles, trials, and victories. Every county was visited, many of them several times." Then came a come-back. Among many prominent names, only those of Lansing F. Smith, aggressive chairman of the executive committee for a number of years, and William H. Danforth, president from 1920 to 1925, can here be mentioned.

In 1922 the Sunday School Association became the Sunday School Council of Religious Education, and in 1937 the Missouri Church and Sunday School Council, taking on some of the functions that ordinarily belong to a Council of Churches. As early as 1929 there had been a demand from the field for the organization of a state federation of churches (*cf.* an article in the *Missouri Sunday School News* for May 1931 by Paul Barton, a Methodist pastor and County S. S. Council secretary.)

February 25, 1936, at a Ministers' Continuation Committee meeting in Sedalia, Mr. Harry W. Becker (executive of the Council of Religious Education) gave a brief historical account of the several attempts that had been made to organize a state council of churches, together with more recent efforts toward expanding the work of the Missouri Sunday School Council. The committee was unanimous in feeling that there should not be a Council of Churches for

Missouri, independent of the Missouri Sunday School Council. "We must preserve the assets we have." Dr. Munro pointed out the mistake made by a number of other states, namely that they built an overhead organization, a merged council, representing both the Federal Council and the ICRE, without much regard for the local county councils that had been functioning. He said there were in Missouri 65 county councils, some of which were weak, but some of which had a strong organization. It was the consensus that Missouri should move slowly toward a more inclusive organization. Dr. J. W. McDonald of Kansas City was helpful at this meeting. In 1940, which marked the Diamond Jubilee of Sunday school work in the state, the Council of Churches was organized. No attempt is made here to sketch the work of this council during the last two decades. Bishop Ivan Lee Holt proved to be one of its most helpful leaders. Missouri too provides a story for a competent student to write.

Missouri's last three executives have been Harry W. Becker 1919-1951; Morris H. Pullin 1952-1953; A. Greig Ritchie 1953-

3. *Other States*

The *California* situation has been complicated by the size of the state, the presence of two great metropolitan centers (San Francisco and Los Angeles) as well as other considerable cities, the early need felt for area organization within the state, the opportunity for service to Nevada and other adjoining territory, the tremendous immigration and consequent population increase, the secularized aspect of Pacific coast regionalism, etc. California seminaries and universities would perform a service if this complex history could be documented before priceless archives are lost.

Nearly a century has elapsed since the first state Sunday School Convention in California. In 1872 it was said that "there had been four" conventions. As early as 1899 the Sunday school forces were divided into northern and southern. Said the latter, "We date from 1880," but the first general secretary was not called until 1902, after organization in 1901 and a "first convention" in 1892, as reported in 1905. In 1899 the Northern California Association issued over 1,000 copies of its paper—"a powerful ally." It too employed its first general secretary in 1902.

From the church federation standpoint California was in the picture early, but not continuously. A series of reorganizations needs careful tracing, as do the relationships between the two chief cities and the Southern and Northern California Councils of Churches.

Similarly, the story in many midwestern states deserves better documentation. E.g., in *Wisconsin*, the 1872 International Convention was told, "Ever since 1846 a state Sunday school organization has been in existence, and with the exception of an interval of four years, it has held an annual convention ever since." How undenominational Sunday school forces and the repeatedly reorganized forces of church cooperation were finally integrated in a state with its own peculiar ecclesiastical complexion, is a story deserving scholarly understanding and sympathetic narration.

Connecticut has been featured in the text as leading the state councils in the acceptance of the merger principle. That full story is worth careful documentation, at greater length than has as yet been attempted. All the older state councils are similarly worthy of careful historical study. An entire volume could

be filled with an account of their origins, development, opportunities, and problems. What seems more likely to happen is that state after state will publish its own history, assisted in some cases by the work of graduate students. When a sufficient accumulation of such material is available, providing factual detail and adequate insights, matched by increasing numbers of city council historical studies, it will become possible to make competent generalizations on the basis of empirical data systematically presented. Here is a field for church history departments to pioneer. The documentation of the multiple origins of church cooperation should complement the story of ecumenical beginnings at the national and world levels.

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